Photo *S. Elwin Neame.*

Sweet is their chins' seductive tilt,
  And sweet the gleam of neck and shoulder;
More sweet their eyes, where star-beams spilt
  Divinely smoulder—
In vain the quest for charm completest
  Where all is sweetest!

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"THERE THEY GO"

From the Painting by G. Sheridan Knowles.

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FROM THE STALLS

DORA CLARE.

A Clever Society Entertainer.

Tall and slight, with soft, wavy, brown hair and big, thoughtful eyes, Miss Dora Clare never fails to win the hearts and appreciation of her audience before she has sung a note or played a single bar.

She has a quiet, restful manner, and takes the deepest interest in her profession.

"I love music," she exclaimed enthusiastically, "and even when I was quite a little thing I would listen to anyone singing or playing for as long as they would consent to perform for my benefit."

Miss Clare has a mezzo-soprano voice of good quality, which is heard to advantage in her favourite songs, "Sloe Eyes" and "I Want Someone to Love Me."

Photo *Foulsham & Banfield.*

Photo *Ellis & Walery.*

BARCLAY GAMMON,

Who can Coax More out of a Piano than Anyone Alive.

Mr. Barclay Gammon is not only a born entertainer, but is born with an ideal entertaining name; Gammon is his real patronymic and no pseudonym.

For a quarter of a century he toiled at a desk in a railway office, the sole outlet for his real talent, that of entertaining, being as a semi-amateur at smoking concerts and dinners. Then Mr. Maskelyne got to hear of him, and offered him a six weeks' contract, which finally developed into one of six years.

His railway manager implored him with tears in his eyes, so to speak, to pause well before throwing up his safe commercial job for such a precarious business as acting in any form. But Mr. Gammon took the risk, and certainly has had no cause to rail at Fate on account of his bargain.

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Photo Lizzie Caswall Smith.

MAIDIE ANDREWS.

A Bewitching Alice in "Alice in Wonderland."

Little Miss Maidie Andrews is just thirteen, and is sister to Bobbie Andrews, the boy-actor and playwright.

"I have played," she says, "Alice in 'Alice in Wonderland,' oh! such a big part, with lots of singing and dancing, and I was in 'Alice in the Looking-glass' when only nine."

Just to give you an idea of the kind of thing:

Tell me hatter,
Let me see you, poor mad hatter,
Do please let me try.
Poor mad hatter,
What's the matter?
You'll be better by-and-by.

Anything more calculated to reduce a mad hatter to reason could hardly be conceived.

It goes down immensely, but Maidie says she would prefer to play Shakespeare.

Relaxations—going to see plays, and eating toffee.

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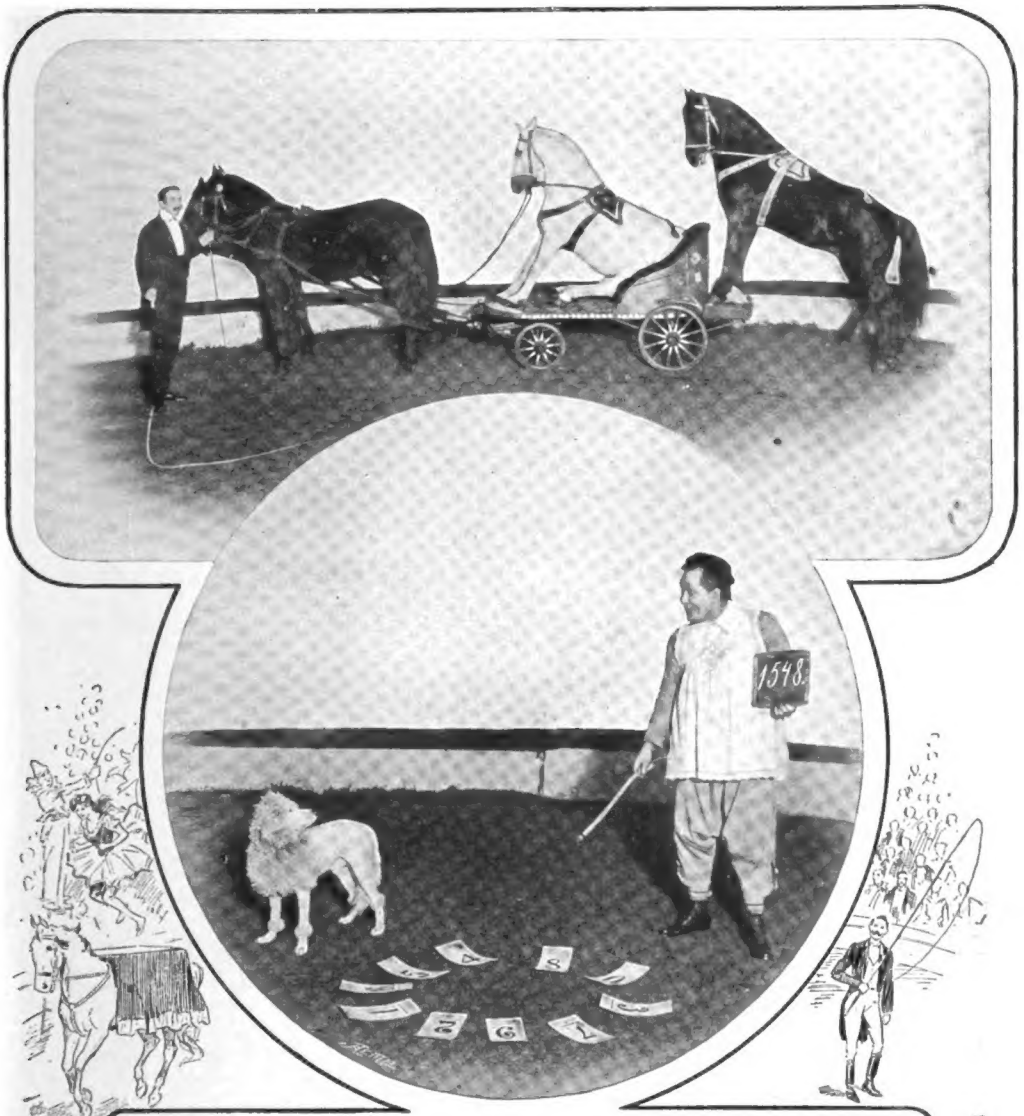

Photos *A. J. Camp'ell.*

BEKETOW'S CIRCUS.

Some Clever Horses and a Wonderful Dog.

There seems no limit to the extraordinary things one can teach horses. Here is a carriage with a milk-white steed inside. The photograph is genuine, the procession as depicted goes round and round the ring, not once but many times. It is said that the occupant quite looks forward to his daily ride. Certainly there are harder ways in which a circus horse may have to earn a living.

Antony, of Beketow's Circus, is the cleverest and the dearest little dog in all the world. Cards with figures printed upon them are placed in a circle on the ground, and Antony can pick out any one that is asked for. More than that, when several numbers are mentioned he can add them together. He appears to make a mental calculation, and then suddenly dives on a figure representing the required total—and, stranger still, he can make up any big total demanded by picking out as many as four figures and placing them side by side.

Some say it isn't doggy arithmetic at all, but a clever system of signals from Tom Balling, his master.

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MADGE LESSING.

One of the Public's Greatest Favourites.

Most people think she is American—that is because she has lived so long in the States—but Miss Madge Lessing is, in fact, London born.

One of the best and most popular of her songs is "Good-bye, Little Girl, Good-bye," and thereby hangs a tale. On leaving the theatre one night Miss Lessing was pestered by a street hawker to purchase an unauthorised copy of her own song. Her answer was witty and crushing: "If I buy one at all it will be from Hopwood & Crew (the publishers), not the pirate crew."

It was once nearly "good-bye" in good earnest for Miss Lessing; swimming round the pier head at Rhode Island with a companion, they were carried away by a strong current, and for nearly twenty minutes Miss Lessing struggled to keep her friend afloat. Both were rescued in an unconscious state.

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Photo *Foulsham & Banfield.*

MABEL RUSSELL.

A Promising Musical Comedy Actress.

It is quite unnecessary for so charming and versatile a young actress as Miss Mabel Russell to amass horseshoes in order to bring herself good luck, for she possesses talents of quite a high order, added to a charming personality.

After appearing in the "Lady Dandies" at Daly's Theatre, Miss Russell went on tour with the piece, playing Miss Gabrielle Ray's part in the provinces, where her delightful dancing and graceful acting won golden opinions. She is bright and optimistic by nature. "I never worry," she remarked cheerfully; "the worst streak of bad luck is bound to give out if you only wait long enough."

Unfortunately some people die in the meanwhile!

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Photo *S. Elwin Neame.*

LILLIAN BURNS.

Who Contemplates Exchanging the Stage for the Studio.

Miss Lillian Burns, of "The Gay Gordons," is a very clever miniature painter.

"I make heaps of money at it," she says. "I have got a splendid connection, and mean to give up the stage."

She has painted many well-known people, including Miss Edna May, and receives high prices for her work. Her only regret is that she will be leaving dear Mr. and Mrs. Hicks.

"It is quite a happy family at the Aldwych, everybody gets on so well with everybody else—no petty spites or jealousies."

Others have said the same, Miss Burns.

She has painted the famous Hicks baby twice.

Miss Burns is rather *petite*, has noticeably dark hair and a winning manner. Being so artistic herself, she is rather exacting towards her photographer.

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Photo *Bassano.*

GABY DESLYS.

Être si Cher, si Adorable!

Vraiment she is *chic*, she is *adorable!* Mdlle. Gaby Deslys loves England and Englishmen, and is withal a shrewd observer. "The Englishman is so exact, so methodical; why, even your stage artistes are the soul of business!"

"And then your theatres, are they not clean and new, not shabby and old like ours in Paris." (A thousand thanks, mademoiselle!) "And your audiences are so discriminating, and that makes their applause worth so much."

Discrimination is a cold word to apply to fairy charm and beauty such as hers; captive abject fascination would be a good deal nearer the mark.

S. K. Eida is an amiable looking Japanese who made a hit with Mdlle. Deslys in the ju-jitsu dance in "The New Aladdin." Both lithe and active, they made an admirable pair.

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Photo *Bassano.*

MAY KENNEDY.

A Grand-Niece of Byron's Friend.

Her real name is Trelawney, and she is grand-niece of Trelawney, well known as an intimate friend of Lord Byron.

"I am most interested in everything connected with my uncle's friend," she says, "and I adore 'Don Juan.'"

In stature tall,
I hate a dumpy woman,

sings the bard. Miss Trelawney is fully six feet, and withal a very lovely girl, in fact, quite a Byronic heroine.

She was untamable at school, but then Pere Trelawney was always so foolishly fond of and indulgent to his lovely girls.

She used to play pranks, like throwing stones at butcher-boys — and one day the butcher-boys revenged themselves by tying her up with her own skipping-rope to some railings.

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THERE'S MANY A SLIP

The Story of a Would-be Hero.

By Claude E. Benson.

Charlie Maynard was, to use his own expression, broke to the world. Also he was depressed. This unsatisfactory condition of mind was brought about partly by the equally unsatisfactory condition of his finances, partly by alcohol, and partly by the fact that on the morrow he was, for a season at least, to leave his country for his country's good.

Moreover, he was, for his years (five and twenty), a disappointed man. He had failed to realise his ideals of fame and fortune; fame, that is to say, of the V.C., Albert Medal type, with a special proviso at the back of Charlie's mind that he should not get damaged in the business; fortune—enough means to enable him to live just a little beyond his income, whatever that income might be.

Instead of fame and fortune had come shame (so far as Charlie could feel it) and shortness of cash. Like many young scamps he had outrun the constable. Like many young scamps he had gone to the Tribes for the shekels. Like many young scamps he had lied to his father.

That was the worst trouble of all. It is unwise for a young man, when he has to meet a note of hand, to borrow money from his father on the pretext of carrying over some illusory stock, because the father is bound to find him out sooner or later, and will be very angry. In this case his indignation took the shape of arrangements for Charlie to depart, though with not much *éclat* or beat of drum, o'er widespread seas to distant lands, where resided a brawny Colonial relative, who was to take him in hand and pay him according to his work. This latter clause did not promise a very heavy strain on the Colonial's purse, for Charlie, though a fine body of a man, in spite of five years' lying and dissipation, detested above all things, except paying his debts, anything that in any way resembled hard work.

And so it came to pass that one fine summer morning this ill-used young man found himself seated for the last time in his club, with his last five-pound note in one pocket and a revolver in the other. This weapon—which is supposed to be an indispensable part of the equipment of every young ne'er-do-well who goes to the Colonies—was the parting gift of his sorrowing sister.

Charlie was as proud of his "gun," as he called it, as a child of a new toy. He was for ever showing it to his worthy sympathisers who were making his departure an excellent excuse for extra nips. He sat with it in his hand for an hour at a stretch, planning out triumphs over bushrangers, none of whom, be it noted, were by any chance to possess the faculty of shooting straight. Occasionally, however, these visions would be crossed by the ugly fact that on the morrow he was to leave England, with all its ease and pleasant vices, for a life of hard work and discipline.

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Gradually this certainty grew till it dominated the entire outlook, and became unbearable. Charlie got up, and began to pace the room with quick, unequal strides, which was, perhaps, about as near as he was ever likely to approximate to the hero of romance, who invariably does so in moments of agitation. There was too much furniture in the room to admit of extensive solace being derived from this form of locomotion, so he went out to pace the streets.

By-and-by a brilliant solution of his difficulties occurred to him. He would go to Hungerford Bridge and throw himself over. It is satisfactory to reflect that, even had not Fate intervened, there would have been no probability of the Thames being spoilt in that way, and that he would certainly have got no farther than the Grand Hotel bar. Fate, however, in the shape of a small body of Mounted Police, intervened, trotting down Pall Mall. Charlie, who had a soul above reading anything in the newspapers except the racing news, plus the front pages of certain coloured periodicals devoted to sport, followed. His dramatic disappearance, he reflected, would not lose by waiting until he had had a look at the function, be it what it might.

The police turned off between Marlborough House and St. James' Palace. Charlie followed without excitement. It was evident that some distinguished individual was going to pass, but his interest in such people was languid. On either side of the turning into the King's Drive a small crowd, four or five deep, had gathered, straining and craning to get a view of the pageant, or procession, or whatever it might be. To the right and left in the direction of Buckingham Palace and the L.C.C. Offices were scattered knots of twos and threes, with here and there individuals. Charlie took up his position next to one of these.

This individual was a small man of aggressive mien and skimpy build, clad in a bowler hat, frock coat, brown boots, black bootlace tie, etc., the type of man who stands on his rights, and has the law of all who contravene them. He was also conversationally disposed.

"Fools!" he commented, indicating the crowds with a jerk of his thumb, "jostling each other when they have only half-a-dozen yards to walk to see perfectly. Not that there's anything to see."

"Indeed. Who is coming along, then?" questioned Charlie, just for something to say.

"The President of the United States of America," replied the little man disgustedly. "Pah! The humbug! Pretends to be a Republican, and carries on like a blooming monarch."

Here he paused to emphasise his contempt in an unmistakable manner.

"Not that I can stand any of them," he continued, oracularly addressing Charlie, a flower-girl, three sparrows, and a policeman. "If I had my way, I'd have *him*," jerking his head in the direction of the abode of the hardest-worked man in England, "out of his palace—living on the fat of the land when thousands of poor devils are starving."

"Now, then! None of that!" interrupted the constable.

"You mind your own interference, policeman. This ain't Russia; this is a free country. Go on!" Then confidentially to Charlie, as the officer turned away in confusion of face: "They do understand some things, though, better in Russia. If some of them came over here, and put a bullet into one or two of our blooming tyrants, it would do them good."

Even in these days of the march of medical science, this was a hard saying, and Charlie, who was somewhat amused, was about to question it, when a stir amongst the onlookers announced the coming of the procession. The little man moved slightly forward. It seemed to Charlie that his manner and expression changed. An idea occurred to him.

Nearer and nearer came the carriage. With waving plumes, glitter of steel, and clatter of hoofs the Life Guards trotted past in brave array. Verily, for a Republican, even though visiting a King, there *was* an incongruity in this pride, pomp, and circumstance. Then the President came in sight, a stout, bourgeois-looking man, with a jolly face and keen eyes.

And then—there was a report, a shout, and the Socialist was lying, half-dazed, on his back, with Charlie on the top of him, holding him down with a grip against which he struggled in vain.

There was a closing in of the people—a sudden crowd, from the midst of which rose first Charlie, flushed, but collected, and immediately afterwards, fast in the grasp of a constable, the Socialist, violently excited.

"Let me go!" he yelled. "I'll have the law of you, I will. I'm innocent. Oh, let go! You're breaking my arm."

"Innocent!" grinned the policeman, who, not unmindful of his rebuke, was perhaps not handling his man with exaggerated

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tenderness. "Innocent! Come off it! I heard you talking just now. I saw you fire. I——"

"But," interrupted the captive in a broken voice, "I tell you I am innocent. Search me! Where's the pistol? I couldn't have fired without a weapon, now could I, officer? Where is it?"

At this moment a guardsman rode up. The procession had been halted, and the President and the glittering personages with him desired that the gentleman who had so bravely and promptly interfered should be presented to them.

Charlie Maynard walked back from that interview looking an inch, and feeling at least three inches taller, yet nobly subdued withal. The crowd, which now numbered many hundreds, was being kept back by a cordon of police, within which stood the prisoner, the constable who had arrested him, and two inspectors. Way was readily made for the man of the moment.

There was a report, a shout, and the Socialist was lying, half-dazed, on his back, with Charlie on the top of him.

"Have you found the revolver?" was Charlie's first question. "It was a revolver, I saw it."

"No," returned one of the inspectors. "Not a trace. It's not on him," nodding towards the prisoner, "and we've searched all round. It's very odd."

"Ah!" commented Charlie, "but perhaps you don't know, Inspector, that the first thing this fellow said when the constable took him into custody was: 'Search me! Where's the pistol?' That is so, officer, is it not?"

The constable admitted it was so with much sageness. The inspector took his chin in his hand and reviewed the prisoner solemnly from head to foot.

"Of course I know nothing about these things," continued Charlie apologetically, "but it struck me as being suspicious. Why should he be so anxious about a pistol, or

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revolver, if he had not one? And might not the weapon have been snatched up by an accomplice in the scurry? These anarchists never work alone, do they, and if the revolver could be traced, mightn't it lead to the incrimination of the whole gang?"

"More than likely, sir, more than likely. Don't you think so?" to his fellow-inspector, who signified his concurrence by a nod, "And now, sir, I must ask you to come with us to the station whilst this man is charged."

"Certainly," agreed Charlie. "Supposing we drive."

A hansom and a four-wheeler were called, and the prisoner, with one inspector and the constable, drove off in the cab, Charlie, with the other inspector, following in the hansom, amidst a volley of cheers.

During that short drive Charles Maynard was singularly silent. He was thinking—and he had brains, and could use them when he chose. He knew that the ubiquitous reporter would prevent him, in a scriptural sense, if ever he arrived at the police-station, and might perhaps prevent him, in another and less pleasant sense, with regard to future operations. Wherefore he spake to the inspector *en route*.

"Have you any objection—I mean, is there any objection to letting my name stand over till to-morrow? I shall have to appear then anyhow. It is for no unworthy motive." (The inspector was sure of that.) "Unless it is to avoid my life being made a curse to me this evening at the club. As a matter of fact, I want to spring a surprise on my dear old father. I think he will be pleased."

Charlie smiled a smile of filial tenderness. The inspector was duly touched. There would be no objection, but the name would be quite safe at the station with the police, and——"

"Not with those reporters about," interrupted Charlie, pointing to an eager crowd of sleuth-hounds gathering outside the station. "They would get information out of a mummy. And could you do me an extra favour, and spirit me away by another exit? Otherwise I shall be hounded to death."

This was readily arranged, and for nearly an hour after their quarry had flown the hungry men of Fleet Street lingered round the forbidden portals, to the huge satisfaction of the police, by whom, rumour hath it, the reporter is not regarded with overmuch favour.

His own man once more, Charles Maynard drove to his club and satisfied much or his thirst and a modicum of his self-appreciation with strong waters. Within a minute he recognised that this was a mistake. In his excited condition the liquor went to his head at once. He realised that, till he had calmed down, he must be most temperate, otherwise he might make an appearance before the police next day under conditions less heroic than he contemplated.

Moreover, the club was becoming embarrassing. Everybody was talking of the outrage, wondering, speculating, questioning. Already he had been compelled, in furtherance of a preconceived plan, to tell two lies with an *alibi* as the object, and though he had no objection to lying *per se*, it is futile to lie when one is bound to be detected within twenty-four hours. Finally he fled to Jermyn Street to the refuge of the Turkish baths.

Stretched in the cooling room, in luxurious lassitude, this young man dreamt dreams. His heavy baggage was awaiting him at Euston to be taken out that night. It would now wait *his* convenience. The vessel in which he was to be conveyed to his convict settlement was awaiting him, with its captain, at Liverpool.

It would sail without him.

Charlie chuckled as he pictured the captain's rising wrath on his continued non-appearance, and the irate message that would be dispatched to his father by the pilot. He pictured, too, his home on the morrow—his mother and sister keeping back their tears with difficulty, his father sitting stern, with set, drawn face, wondering whether he had not been too hard on the boy after all.

Then the servant would arrive with the post-bag and the papers, and they would read the story of the attempt on the President, and wonder at the wickedness of the man, and the pluck and promptitude of the unknown rescuer. And then, in the evening, the servant would present, not without suppressed excitement, the local *Evening Chronicle*, and they would see that it was he, Charlie Maynard, the exiled black sheep of the family, who had done this thing. And, a few minutes afterwards, the prodigal son himself, laden with glory and honour, would walk in and confess his faults, nobly penitent, and beg forgiveness, nobly generous. It was a triumph.

Charlie dined quietly at the Criterion grill, and afterwards pursued an aimless course towards theatre-land without any very definite

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object. Outside the Empire a startling placard arrested him.

THIS EVENING.
THE AMERICAN BIOGRAPH.
TO-DAY'S OUTRAGE.

And more in smaller type.

"'Tis pleasant, sure, to see one's name in print," and still more gratifying to watch oneself in deathless action. Charlie purchased an amphitheatre seat and went in. The entertainment bored him, but with the opening of the biograph "turn" boredom vanished. He felt a novel sense of superiority Hundreds of people would see what he would see, but he alone would comprehend. Quickly flashed the pictures, but his thoughts outsped them. He alone would understand the meaning of that calculated step back—the careful measuring of the distance between Charles Maynard and his victim. He alone would interpret the movement of Charles Maynard's right hand as it whipped the revolver from his pocket and fired a shot into the ground, whilst a heavy blow from the left felled the Socialist. He alone would recognise the lightning movement with which Charles Maynard slipped the revolver back into the pocket as he flung himself on the prostrate form. He alone——

Charlie took from his pocket a revolver, and opening the breech, drew out a discharged cartridge.

The man next him rose with an exclamation. Others were moving all over the house. The evidence of the biograph was distinct and damning.

A minute later, by an effort he could neither control nor comprehend—a blind instinct of flight—Charlie found himself in the street. He looked at his watch. There was yet time to catch the train at Euston. A hansom took him at speed. The porters, somehow, got his luggage into the train, and Charlie Maynard, panting in an empty carriage, his white face pressed against the glass, was left peering anxiously down the platform for the avengers of crime. At length, after a few interminable minutes, the engine commenced to move. He fell back on the cushions with a gasp of relief. One by one the lights of the station flashed by till the train was clear of the platforms. Then Charlie took from his pocket a revolver, and opening the breech, drew out a discharged cartridge. For a moment he balanced the empty shell in his hand, then, letting down the window, flung it, with a bitter curse, into the darkness.

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We're Four Little Baby-Girls.

We're four little baby-girls
Come in for our tea
(There's Mabel and Dorothy
And Hilda and me);
Enjoying the prospect of
The jam on the shelf
(Meaning Mabel and Dorothy
And Hilda and self).

We ain't like the baby-girls
You read of in books,
A-like to the angels
In conduct and looks.
Which thems saggerations
Of what babies be
(Such as Mabel and Dorothy
And Hilda and me).

Our nurse ain't a pretty girl
Who 'llows us to roam,
But an ugly old Sairey Gamp
Who soon drags us home;
Who soon marches home again
From the blue dancing sea
(With Mabel and Dorothy
And Hilda and me).

And maybe we're "model babes,'
And maybe we ain't;
But still of our characters
There's not much complaint;
Just four pretty baby-girls
As good as *can* be
(Meaning Mabel and Dorothy
And Hilda and me).

C. J. Cole.

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A-A-A-Atchoo

A Little Chat - About - Sneezes.

By M. Tindal.

Mr. Hassall depicts a sneeze sneezed in the stilly watches of the night. The sufferer huddles in the bedclothes in his agony.

Sneeze on a Monday, you sneeze for danger,
Sneeze on a Tuesday, you kiss a stranger:
Sneeze on a Wednesday, you sneeze for a letter,
Sneeze on a Thursday, you'll get something better.
Sneeze on a Friday, you sneeze for sorrow,
Sneeze on a Saturday, Love comes on the morrow.
Sneeze on a Sunday, you'd best safety seek,
The devil will have you the rest of the week.

The above is a bit of North-country folk-lore, one of ten thousand superstitions concerning sneezing. When the first man gave his first sneeze, he was surprised; he could not understand what was happening. His successors were equally alarmed and astonished by their sneezes; and when gradually the idea of spirits and gods and devils developed to account for mysteries, naturally the sneeze came in for its superstitious explanation.

A Hebrew tradition has it that from the time of Adam to the days of Jacob sneezing was a Divine sign of death. Jacob, however, by making sacrifice and prayer, succeeded in changing it to a sign of life; and from Jacob's day onwards babies have sneezed on coming into the world. The young mother of to-day imagines that her poor darling has caught a cold, but doctors in their prosaic way declare that babies sneeze to clear their brains and noses of clogging matter

An Eastern legend would have us believe that in the place of everlasting fire there sits a judge who keeps before him a book in which the names of all mortals are written. Every day he turns one page, and this settles what mortals are to come into his presence for judgment. As the leaf is turned, each of the chosen ones sneezes.

Superstitions die hard; and to this day in the north of England somebody is sure to say "Bless the bairn!" if you sneeze. The idea is that by sneezing you have purged yourself of devils, and have become in a fit state to benefit by a blessing.

Had you lived in ancient Greece, your sneeze would have been greeted with a "Jove preserve thee!" In ancient Italy it would have called forth, "Sit salutiferum." In

This clever sketch by Mr. W. H. Robinson shows the sixth sneeze of a fit of sneezing. Notice the cumulative vibrations induced by the preceding five.

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Mr. Lawson Wood's clever sketch: Waiting for a sneeze, notice of whose arrival has been telegraphed in advance.

Italy to-day a sneeze is greeted with the word "Felicità," in Germany with "Gesundheit," in France with "Bonne santé." The Persians have a saying in one of their holy books: "And whensoever it shall be that thou hearest a sneeze given by thy neighbour thou shalt say unto him, 'Ahunovar,' and so it shall be well with thee." In this case, it is the man who blesses that is blessed.

There are times to sneeze, and times not to sneeze.

(It is fortunate that sneezing may be regulated to a certain extent. Take snuff, and you will sneeze; press a finger on your upper lip when you have a warning of nose-titillation, and you will not sneeze.)

Aristotle believed that a sneeze in the morning was a good augury, in the afternoon a bad one. Ancients who sneezed while fastening on their sandals promptly went back to bed, for it was clear to them that the moment was not auspicious for rising. So the Hindoo who sneezes while bathing in the Ganges before his prayers are finished begins to say them again from the beginning. In the north of England they say that to sneeze once brings luck, but a double sneeze brings bad luck; while if you should sneeze for three nights in succession, somebody in your house will die.

A time not to sneeze is when you are proposing. A whole story-book was once fashioned out of the idea that the hero sneezed when midway through his proposal, lost, in consequence, his opportunity, and never recovered it.

Another story in which a sneeze was the central incident concerned a billiard match. Two men were playing a game of billiards for a mighty wager. The hero was winning, and had come to the crucial stroke which would have given him the game when the villain produced a reverberating—"A-a-a-atchoo!" This so upset the hero that he made a miscue, and the villain won the match. It appeared later that a pinch of snuff had brought about his sneeze, and he was properly punished in due course for his villainy.

"A-a-a-atchoo," by the way, is only one of the many devices for spelling the sound of a sneeze. It is, perhaps, the best. A good second is "Hut-tish-o-o-o," while "Ar-rat-chew" has its claims. Mr. W. Heath Robinson, as a glance at his clever sketch of a young man sneezing shows, has hit upon three methods of putting the sound into words: "Atishew," "A-atichishew," and "Ati-chew." The sound of a sneeze depends a good deal upon its force, so perhaps all three spellings are justified. "How do you spell a sneeze?" would be a pleasing variant to the stock riddles.

One of the loudest sneezes recorded by history was delivered by Timotheus, the Athenian. He and his fleet were just putting out to sea on a hazardous expedition.

"One safely past—will there be another, and, if so, shall I survive it?" The drawing is by Mr. Jasper Weird.

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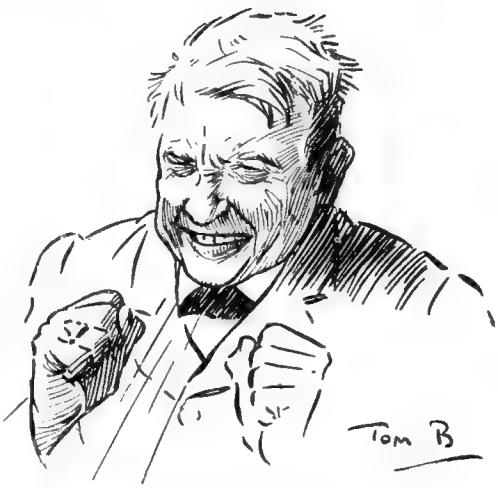
when he sneezed so heartily that the entire fleet was startled. The sailors took the sneeze as a bad omen, and demanded an instant return to port. But Timotheus rose up and spake thus: "And do ye wonder, O Athenians, that among ten thousand there be one with a cold in his head? How ye would cry out were all of us thus afflicted!" These brave words restored the shattered confidence of the sailors, and they sailed off to victory without more ado.

The longest sneezes on record were wont to be heard in the Court and country of the King of Monomotapa (whoever he may have been). Custom ordained that when His Majesty sneezed all present must do likewise, and the sneeze must on no account be allowed to die down until it had passed beyond the confines of the land. So the courtiers passed on the sneeze to the servants, who passed it on to the soldiers at the palace gate, who sent it to the beggars without the gate, to be echoed and re-echoed until the sneeze had been carried from the throne to the farthest frontiers of the kingdom.



Mr. Tom Browne shows a man wrestling with a difficult sneeze.

Merely to look at Mr. Charles Harrison s sketch is conducive to a fit of sneezing. The victim has sneezed so much that he does not care if five or fifty are to follow.

Whether we credit this story or not, the most important sneeze of history is well authenticated. This was the famous sneeze of Xenophon, which decided the fate of Athens. There came a moment in one of his wars when his soldiers were wavering, followed by a moment when one of the soldiers sneezed loudly. The idea was spread by some ingenious officer that the gods had employed the sneezing soldier's nose as a trumpet wherewith to sound the blast of victory; and, inspired by the idea, the army made up its mind to do or die, and so saved Athens.

Contemporary history, as recorded in German and American newspapers, gives us a case where a sneeze was regarded as an insult. An American in a Berlin café was discussing with a German as to the relative merits of Presidents and Emperors, and chanced to sneeze. "So much," said he, "for your Emperor." He was promptly arrested.

In the annals of medical history there are several cases where people have been overtaken by fits of sneezing which have proved fatal.

And the history of the stage has many cases of actors who, when posing as corpses, have ruined scenes by giving violent vent to inappropriate "A-a-a-atchoos."

The sneeze indignant. The old gentleman depicted by Mr. T. H. Robinson resents being disturbed by such a trifling occurrence.

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"Monnie Mongoose"

Being a Letter from a Mongoose in England to his Brother in Ceylon.

By Frederick Eustace.

For those who have never seen one, I must attempt the difficult task of describing the subject of this story. He is about a foot long, with a tail about the same length; in colour he is nearest to terra-cotta, sprinkled with grey, with the exception of a black, bushy tip to his tail, and neat black gloves and boots. Standing very low, he moves without a sound, and with extraordinary quickness, not galloping (except when playing), but moving more like a tiny trotting pony. Playful as a kitten, and very affectionate to those he knows to be friendly, he is at the same time very independent, and goes his own way, a terra-cotta, rubber-tyred shadow. Take your cap and throw it at him; it was thrown true, but the mongoose jumped when your arm went back to throw, and just before you actually *did* throw; by the time the cap hits the floor he is just beginning to creep up to investigate with his ever sniffing nose. But you notice, he did not turn and run, he ran *backwards*, and this is because the first of the "Mongoose Maxims" is "Face the Foe"; the other three are "Silence," "Speed," and "Suspicion." What follows is a copy of a letter from "Monnie Mongoose," who has lived in England nearly two years, to his younger brother in Ceylon.

England,
Hot Sun Month.

Dear Mongosling,

I expect you have been wondering for some time what has become of me, but the fact is I left Ceylon some eighteen months ago in an English man-of-war, and am now quite settled down in a country house in England, where I look after the place, and do my best generally for the people who live here, that is, as long as they let me have my own way.

These people you will get to know as the names occur in my letter, but I must mention two characters in particular.

One is a hulking great brute called "Cluffus," they call him a "Great Dane"; I'm not sure what "Dane" means, but I expect it is the polite word for "fool;" anyhow he certainly is that. Sometimes I think he means well, but he is an awful nuisance, especially when he lies down in front of the sun in the drawing-room after dinner.

By the way, I forgot that I used to wonder at first how Sybil and her mother and the others used to keep from freezing in the evenings, but I soon found that they had a piece of sun in each room, which they kept behind some bars, and which I have no doubt they pulled down from a black hole in the wall, which they called the chimney; I feel sure of this, because at all times, and especially after a good meal of black lumps, the sun always used to try to pull himself up this black hole, but they had him tied down to the bars somehow.

The other character I must mention is "Simon J. Rattler," a nasty, peaky-faced, rough-haired terrier. I took an intense dislike to him at once; he is a low, underhand fellow, and if what the cats round about here say is true, he is also a murderer; but I am glad to say he is a bit afraid of me, and we don't trust each other much.

Well, I will pass over my first week here, as I was kept in a cage, and it was about as

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much as I could do to keep my temper when they came to see me, but I managed to live through that week somehow, and by saying gnah-h-h-h-h-h-h! every time anyone came to see me (which is the mongoose for—"For goodness' sake let me have my own way!") I at last got them to let me out. After that things were much better, though I was still shut in a cupboard at night by "The Person"—I will call him nothing worse—who brought me from Ceylon.

In the morning, however, I escaped and ran downstairs to the dining-room, where there was a fine smell of things to eat, but, would you believe it, every single thing was up on a nasty four-legged thing in the middle of the room? Nasty suspicious people!

I did my best to climb up one of the legs, and just as I thought I should be able to reach the drum-stick of a chicken that was sticking out from a plate, something gave way, and I only got a nasty bruise instead of the chicken. This made me very angry, and I rushed out towards the kitchen, chattering at the top of my voice, and then and there had my first bit of luck.

Whom should I run right into but Mary, the new servant girl. I never heard such a shriek. I was quite startled myself at the noise, and she rushed back to the kitchen, calling to Biddy (our old Irish nurse) to come and kill the "*rat*."

"Rat!" indeed, the poor fool; but I soon forgave her, as in her fright she dropped a whole dish of eggs that she was bringing into the dining-room—you *never* saw such a mess.

I was always a tidy person, so I swept up the eggs, and then went into the drawing-room, meaning to lie down in front of the sun and digest quietly.

However, the sun had got away up the hole in the wall, and all I found was old Cluffus sprawled right across the mat, and looking so bored that, just to put some life into him, I crept up and bit his tail. I thought it was a snake at first. My goodness, you ought to have heard the noise he made as he rushed out of the room. However, my luck was dead in that morning, for as he ran down the passage he came across the few remains of the eggs that I hadn't had time to tidy up, and he soon slobbered them down his throat in that disgusting way he has of eating.

I was rather put out by this at the time, having meant to go back for them myself, but, when a little later I heard him getting his jacket dusted by "The Person" for eating his eggs, I smiled to myself, and went out on to the lawn and cleaned my whiskers and hands well.

I also made a discovery by going out. To my surprise I found that the sun had got up the hole from the drawing-room, and was shining overhead in his usual place. I often used to wonder where he got to at night-time, and now I know.

I must say the lawn in front of our house isn't half a bad place, and I began to feel quite playful, when Sybil's mother brought me out some milk and sponge cake, which was very good, though I couldn't do it fair justice after the eggs.

Most of my people play a game on the lawn in the afternoons called "Croakee," or some such name, but I don't think much of it. As far as I could see, one of them went up and hit a ball with an enormous wooden hammer, while the others sat on the bank. As soon as he had hit the ball he would say something to it, and all the others on the bank would say, "Hush!" And then another one would have a try.

Those balls are deuced heavy, I can tell you. "The Person" rolled one up to me the other day, and I ran out to play with it, but the bally thing ran

Whom should I run into but Mary, the new servant girl.

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right over my foot, and if I hadn't made a pretty good jump, I believe it would have squashed me flat. I did feel a fool! And all the silly asses laughed like anything, too.

In the evening I went into the drawing-room, and there sure enough was the sun in its cage, and old clumsy Cluffus spread out all over the rug in front of it. However, I soon got rid of him, and climbing into the fender place I lay down quite close to the sun, in fact almost underneath him. It was *fine* and warm, and I was just thinking of a sleep when, would you believe it, the sun snatched a red-hot piece right out of himself and threw it on my back. My word! I *did* run, but the beastly thing stuck like a poultice and burnt right through my fur, and what was worse than the burn was to hear that supercilious idiot Rattler sniggering on the sofa. Upon my word, I shall do that fellow an injury some day.

However, Sybil was very nice, and picked me up, and got some vaseline to put on the burn, and after that I felt better, especially when I had eaten the vaseline, though I must say it made my throat feel rather slippery, and the next meal I had slid down before I could taste it.

I find in England it is the thing to go to bed at night, so, although I was feeling particularly lively, I went upstairs at ten o'clock and turned in in the first bed I came to, and got well down into the bottom under the clothes. I was rather unlucky in my choice, as it turned out to be "The Person's," and he never treats me with proper respect. Sure enough, when he came up later and turned in, I put out my hand and clawed his foot gently, just to let him know not to kick me.

He let go a yell that startled me considerably, and was out of bed in one jump; and when he saw who it was he called me all kinds of names and shut me up in the cupboard; he said he'd sooner have a holly bush in the bottom of the bed.

Next morning Biddy came in and put out "The Person's" bath and a lump of brownish lathery stuff that he washes himself with. I have often wanted to see what that stuff was, and this morning I got hold of it. It stuck to one's hands like anything, but was grand stuff to play with, and I also ate a good-sized lump, but it wasn't up to much, so I spread the rest out on the carpet.

Presently "The Person" got up, and when he saw the lathery stuff on the carpet he shouted: "Good Heavens! where's that mongoose?" So I came away at once downstairs and out through the drawing-room on to the lawn. I don't mean to say I ran away, but I don't suppose it took me more than two seconds to reach the lawn, and I only beat his boot down the stairs by about six inches.

Whether it was the hurrying and excitement, or whether it was the lathery stuff I had eaten I couldn't say, but I was jolly bad directly I got on to the lawn; after that I felt better, but sounded very hollow when I ran, and felt very hungry, until luckily I came across a young bird in the shrubs, who had fallen out of his nest trying to fly; he looked very cold and silly, and had hardly any feathers, so I expect he would have died anyhow.

After that I felt ever so much better, but I didn't go into the house all the morning, as everyone seemed to be looking for something, and it's hopeless trying to explain to people who throw things.

All the afternoon I was pretty busy, as I found there were lots of worms living just under the grass, and by making a small hole with your hand you could generally fetch one out if you knew where to look. They are funny, wriggly things, and make you feel all twisty after you've swallowed them. But, hang it all! a fellow must live.

Later on Sybil's mother put out some more sponge cake and milk, but I couldn't manage it just then, as I was still feeling wriggly inside, so I went for a walk round the shrubs just to see if any more birds had been learning to fly—they hadn't, lazy things! And when I got back simply ravenous, the first thing I saw was that greedy wretch Cluffus just licking his nasty, slobbery lips after finishing my sponge cake, and smiling all over his silly face. I *was* angry, and I would have walked straight up and told him so, only there was nothing to hide under, so I just took no notice, and pretended I wasn't hungry.

Later on I went up to the billiard room just to look round, when to my delight I saw a big bird standing quite still in the corner. I didn't waste time wondering how he got in, but began to stalk him at once behind the leg of the table, and when I got quite close I made a spring and caught him fairly by the throat; down he came crash! And I held on tight, expecting him to try to fly away, but he never moved, and no wonder, for I found his inside was only tow, and not at all good to eat.

I was so angry that I tore him all to bits; at least, I was just doing so when I heard somebody coming upstairs, so I ran into

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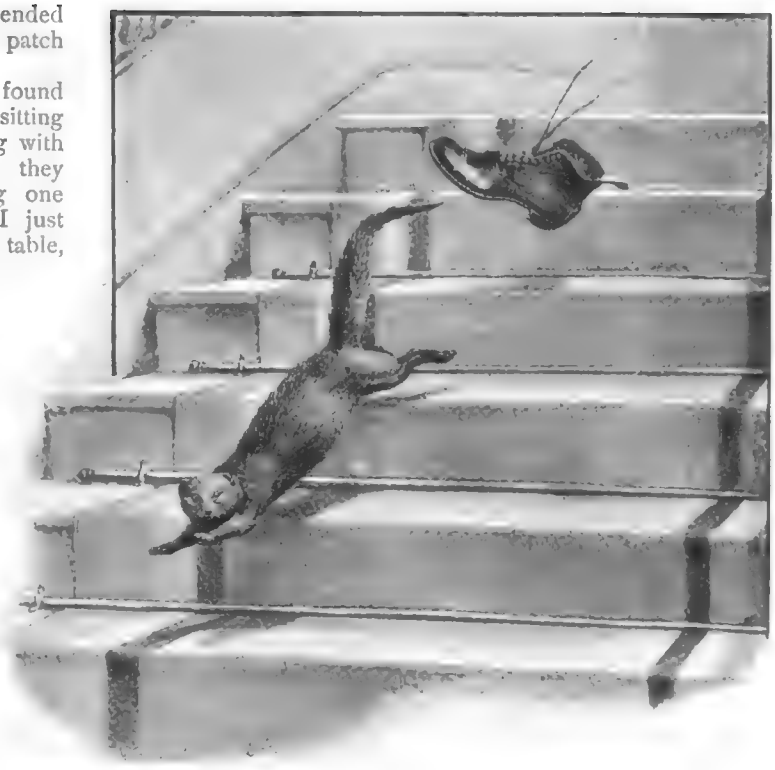
Sybil's room, and pretended to go to sleep in a patch of sun on the floor.

In the evening I found four of my people sitting round a table playing with some card things; they were each throwing one down in turn, so I just jumped on to the table, caught as many cards as I could and bit them just to show I could play, too. But, would you believe it, they shut me outside the door just because they were jealous that I played so well! I said gnah-h-h-h-h as loud as I could, but the selfish things took no notice, so after I had eaten a few beetles in the kitchen I went up to Biddy's room to bed. Here I made another discovery. Biddy has a piece of the sun, too. She keeps it in a stone bottle and puts it in the bottom of her bed at night to keep her feet warm. It *was* fine, and I quite forgot about the others not letting me play cards.



I only beat his boot down the stairs by about six inches.

That night I got out of bed once—right across the floor—partly because I wanted to, and partly because Biddy discovered me and kicked me hard.

I said some bad words at the time, but as soon as she had gone to sleep again I got back into bed and settled down with my back against the sun.

All went well for an hour or two, when I woke up to the fact that the sun wasn't working properly—he wasn't half so hot as he was at first, so, of course, I had to see to it. I turned the stone bottle round and round till at last I found a hole where they had evidently pushed the sun in, and he was fastened in with a cork thing.

Well, I soon set to work with my teeth to get that cork out so that I could tell him to shine harder. After some hard work I managed it, and spoke to him through the hole several times, but he wouldn't answer, so I just put my eye to the hole and tilted the bottle over to try if I could see him, when, would you believe it, he threw hot water out in my face and very nearly blinded me! I was so angry that I pushed my hand in to drag him out, but the brute was so hot inside that I had to snatch my hand out again and dash out of the bed as hard as I could, and I spent the rest of the night trying to cool my hand on the scullery stone floor and by licking it—the brute!

Next morning I went over early to "The Person's" room.

I was so glad I had thought of it, because on the table I found those two bristly, brushy things that he spends so much time in the morning scratching his head with; they are fine things to play with, and the bristles take quite a lot of pulling to get them out, but I had got them pretty nearly bald by the time "The Person" began to wake up.

After that I didn't stop, he is so bad-tempered in the mornings, and besides, I wasn't sure he might not want to scratch his

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head again, so I went down to the drawing-room and had a good sleep.

* * * * *

I must say it does get pretty cold here at certain times, but when those times come on I generally sleep all day and go down in the evening to sit by the sun in the drawing-room, though I have given up lying underneath it.

I remember one morning some time ago (I think it was in Chilly Bones month), I woke up to find the air outside full of white things like feathers floating about by the thousand. "Great coiled cobras!" I said to myself, there must be something worth eating with all those feathers about, and I hurried downstairs and out of the back door, though the cold was awful.

I looked all round, but not a sign of anything could I see, only grey sky and floating white things, so I started to try to catch some of these funny things, and I must say I was never so astonished in my life. I'm certain I bit true, and I was so quick that I very nearly had my tongue off once, but never a sign of anything was there left in my mouth.

I gave it up after a bit in disgust, and went to have a drink out of the dogs' tin, but things were just as bad there; the silly water simply wouldn't come out, though I licked and lapped till my tongue got so cold that I had to rush in and drink Biddy's tea while she was in the larder.

* * * * *

Well! Well! I must end up this letter, as I heard Sybil's mother say the Ceylon mail leaves to-morrow, but I must just tell you of a small affair with Cluffus and Rattler before I end.

This very morning Cluffus had annoyed me by shouting "Hullo!" in my ear at the top of his voice when I was half asleep on the lawn. I shouldn't like to say how high I jumped, but I know I was in the air a considerable time. When I came down I went into the kitchen just to have a look round, and what should I see but a fine fowl on a dish.

Then and there I determined to kill two birds (and two dogs, if possible) with one stone; so I took that chicken by the merry-thought and dragged him out to the dogs' kennels in the yard, where I made a pretty good meal. I didn't eat as much as I could have, though, as I thought if things went wrong I might want to be able to run pretty fast later on.

When I had finished I had a good wash and brush-up, and then went in and pretended to be asleep in the dining-room fender.

Presently I heard a great commotion in the kitchen, and Biddy shouting: "Aye and the divil's flown with the fowl, and may it choke him, the dirty foreign rat."

I guessed that meant me, so I slept pretty hard, and presently they all came in and found me fast asleep, mouth and paws quite clean, so they said it couldn't be me. I smiled right down in my inside and woke up and stretched.

Then they went out to the kennel, and would you believe the luck—the dogs had come round and found the chicken and were actually eating it!

There was a fuss! Every time "The Person" hit Cluffus he groaned oh—h—h low down in his inside, and every time he hit Rattler he shrieked hi—ei at the top of his voice.

I am going to keep clear of them for a day or two.

Well, I really *must* end; will write again next mail. Remember me to my brothers and sisters in Ceylon.

Very agilely yours,

MONNIE MONGOOSE.

Photo, R. Braid, Livingston

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PICTURE PARAGRAPHS.

The Editor is Always Pleased to Purchase from Readers Photographs Suitable for Use in This Feature. All Photographs should be Accompanied by a Short Description.

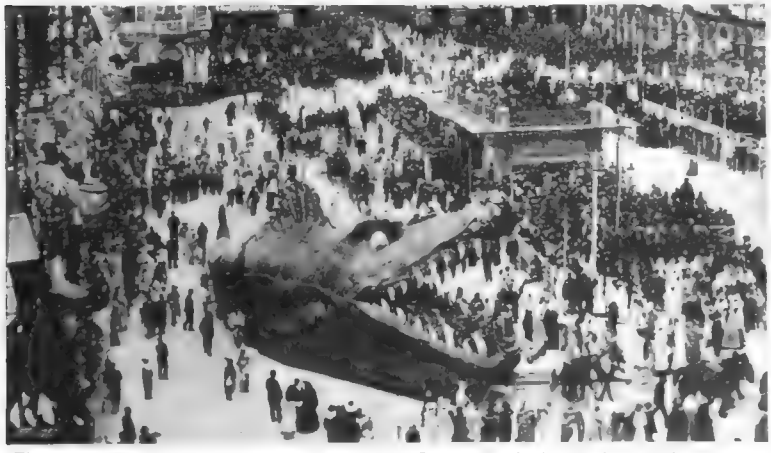
A CARNIVAL FREAK.

ALTHOUGH in staid, prosaic "Merrie England" our utmost effort in processional hilarity is a pageant or the Lord Mayor's Show, in Latin countries the blood runs warmer, and more exciting diversions take place.

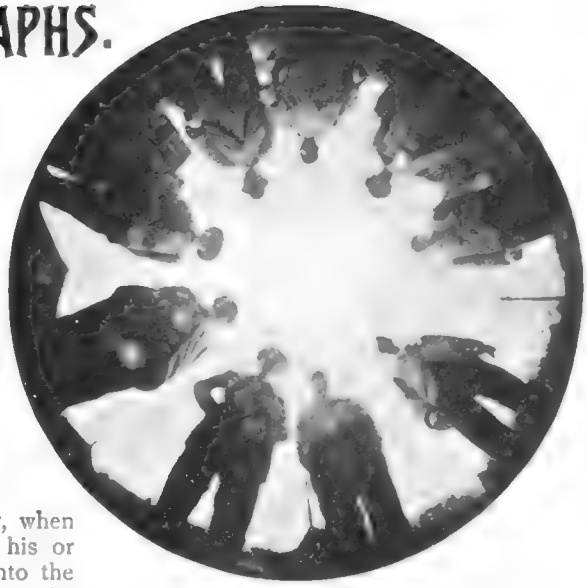
Though said to be moribund, King Carnival still reigns supreme at certain seasons in France and Italy, when every man, woman, and child leaves his or her dignity at home, and goes out into the street to enjoy his or her self. There the gay crowd finds a procession going on, composed of many and various extraordinary monsters, such as the one portrayed in the illustration.

This beast is a crocodile, intended—for some reason known only to its designers—to be a creation emblematic of Music. A band was concealed in the crocodile's mouth, and the reptile was thus enabled to "sing" as it proceeded through the gaily crowded streets.

It formed part of a Parisian carnival, and was greeted by the delighted spectators with wild shouts of "*Vive le crocodile! Vive la Musique!*"



The Car of Music in a recent French carnival. In the crocodile's mouth was a band, by means of which the saurian was made to "sing."



A group of people standing round a small pond, as they appear to the fish in the pond.

THE FISH'S POINT OF VIEW.

MANKIND goes its arrogant way, absolutely indifferent, for the most part, to the feelings of what it contemptuously terms "the lower animals," among which it includes reptiles and the denizens of the deep. How many people, for instance, among the thousands who have stood on the brink of a pond or river, have ever troubled to wonder what kind of an impression they were making on the fish swimming in its waters?

The thoughtless may have now an opportunity to see themselves as fishes see them. The photograph reproduced above was made with a camera of novel construction, under conditions exactly similar to those in which the fish is compelled to make his observations.

A fish swimming under water sees a window of light always directly overhead; all of the objects in the outside world which he is able to see appear somewhere within this circle of light.

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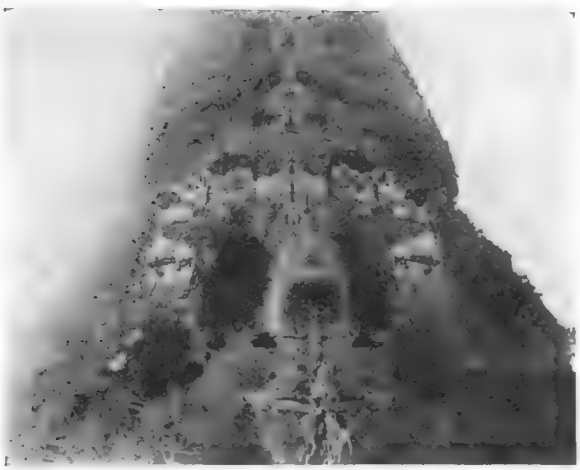

Photo *H. W. Nicholls.*

"What is it—animal, vegetable, or mineral?" Turn the page half round, and it will prove to be a remarkable reflection picture; but which is the reflection and which the reality?

A PRE-GLACIAL HOUSE DOG?

"Oh, is it weed, or fish, or floating hair?" inquired the poet on a certain occasion, thirsting, as poets will, for information. In the present instance, none of the three suggestions is at all plausible, and the bewildered spectator turns again to the picture.

What is it? A monkey, the Missing Link, some pre-historic dog, or an impressionist drawing of a bearskin rug with the head attached?

In reality it is none of these things. Turn the page sideways, and the mystery is solved, for a beautiful view appears, reflected in clear water.

Needless to say, the reflection was not cast on any of the wind-swept waters of this northern isle; few are the lakes of England sufficiently unruffled for such an effect.

The particularly still water is that of a stream near East London, Cape Colony, and its tranquillity has enabled a somewhat remarkable photograph to be taken. For who can say with authority, twist the page round and round as he will, which is the actual scene, and which is the reflection?

We turn the page to the left. "Yes," we say, "this is the actual landscape. The two gentlemen are obviously real in this case, and the sky-line is so clear, too."

We turn the page to the right, and lo! we are amazed to find that we were wrong, and that this is the actual scene, and the other was the reflection.

Well, well!

THE MAN AND HIS WORK.

"The man is greater than his work." So runs the proverb, but M. Alexander Michailovitch Opekuschin, the famous Russian sculptor, has made to himself a graven image which, in point of size at least, is far greater than he. The statue represents the Tsar Alexander III., and was completed for the adornment of the city of Moscow.

It is a quaint thought that, during all the shootings, and scourgings, and killings, and revolutions, and other unpleasantnesses which have disturbed unhappy Russia during recent years, M. Opekuschin was calmly chipping away at his statue quite unconcerned.

Every morning he arose and took up mallet and chisel, every evening he laid it aside, having completed a little more of his gigantic task.

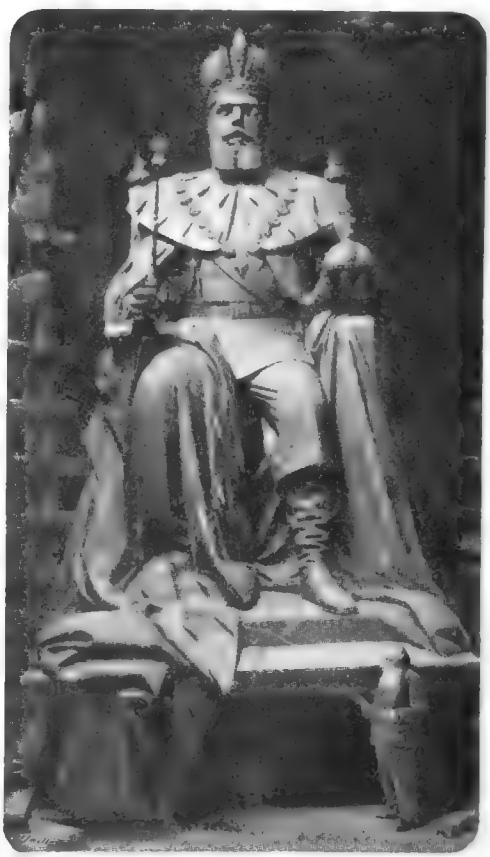

Photo *Exclusive News Agency.*

A contrast—the man and his work. A new gigantic statue of the Tsar Alexander III., and its creator, the famous sculptor, Alexander Michailovitch Opekuschin.

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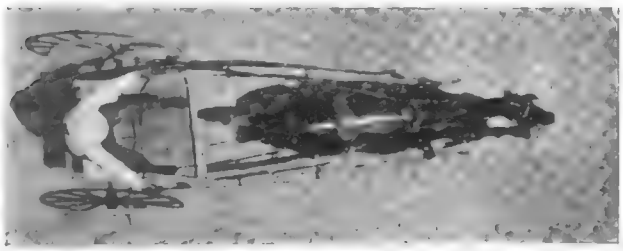
AIDING ARTFUL IMITATION.

EXTRAORDINARY PICTURES TAKEN TO ASSIST EXPERTS IN SETTING UP A HORSE'S SKELETON.

IN the American Museum of Natural History, New York, Professor Henry F. Osborn is mounting the skeleton of Sysonby, a famous trotter, so as to show the great animal in the act of coming under the wire a winner.

To make sure that the work, when completed, shall be, in all respects, true to life, a photographer has been suspended in a sling, fifty feet from the ground, and under him has been raced a horse at breakneck speed. In this way, photographs have been obtained of certain movements of a race-horse in action that were never before caught by a camera. No one before, for instance, knew the exact movements of a horse's spinal column during a race.

In order to follow the movements of the spinal column so as to have it perfectly visible on the photographic plate, a wide white line is painted along the top of the horse's back. Other spots are painted on the hip and flank to outline the various movements of the pelvis and hip-joints.



A trotting horse at full stride, as seen from the air. The white streak along its spine and the spots on its shoulders and flanks are paint marks, placed there to indicate the movements of these parts of its body.

The photographer, who in this case is Mr. S. H. Chubb, an expert in the mounting of horses' skeletons, gets into his rope-sling seat, attached to a pulley, and is hoisted up fifty feet in the air. The photographic instrument is a four by five hand camera, with a mirror showing the exact position of the object below. The horse and sulky are then driven directly beneath and a sharp focus obtained on the top of the back of the animal. After this comes the running performances, when the driver sends his steed at break-neck pace down the roadway, and at the crucial moment, when the horse appears on the reflected mirror above, the shutter is released.

When the present series of overhead photos have been studied, together with a great number of side-view pictures taken of Sysonby in life on the race-course, the final and characteristic pose will be arranged. Probably it will take a year, owing to the extensive and painstaking amount of experimental labour required, before the work of mounting is completed.

Photographing a running horse from the air to obtain pictures to guide experts in setting up the skeleton of Sysonby, a famous American trotter.

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Photo *Topical Press Agency.*
Raffaelo Cascone, on being cleared of a charge of murder that kept him in the Tombs prison for three years, sent a giant candle 10 feet high to the church of his native village in Italy. The candle is guaranteed to burn for three years.

A THREE-YEAR CANDLE.

One, Raffaelo Cascone, whom men call, in the neighbourhood he adorns, "The King of Mulberry Street," has not long ago been cleared of a charge of murder which kept him in the Tombs prison, New York, for three years.

On his release, he determined, in the gratitude of his heart, to do a little good for once in a way. He ordered an enormous candle to be made, which, when completed, was dispatched to his native village in Italy, where it will burn night and day in the little church.

It is said that on its arrival at the small Italian village the candle nearly created a panic. However this may be, slight local excitement would have been excusable, for seldom is such a candle manufactured as the one purchased by Raffaelo for a thank-offering.

It is over ten feet in height, and the makers guarantee that it will burn for three years.

The candle is decorated with beautiful pictures, religious in conception. The young man who is supporting it is no weakling, but it required all his strength to keep the massive illuminant in position.

THE CHAMBERLAIN ROCK.

Wind and weather play strange tricks, even with hard stone, and many a statue in an exposed position has slowly but surely had its nose whittled away by keen, rain-laden blasts from the icy winds this country enjoys during the winter months.

Occasionally, however, the elements adopt a creative and not a destructive policy. This has been the case in the Valley of the Rocks, in North Devon, where wind and rain have carved in the solid stone an excellent likeness, in profile, of Mr. Chamberlain.

As will be seen, the ex-Colonial Secretary's strong features have been given a singularly aggressive cast; and the "pushful" qualities popularly attributed to him have been accentuated in this portrait done by the weather of his native land.

The Valley of Rocks is in the "Lorna Doone" country, and actually raises itself from the left-hand side of the mound surmounted by the famous Castle Rock.

It lies about a mile to the west of Lynton, but few, in all probability, of the hundreds who visit that well-known and picturesque little town have ever noticed the natural portrait of Mr. Chamberlain in the vicinity.

Still, it is only natural that this should be so. The average tourist seldom raises his nose from his guide-book, and rarely troubles to see the country he is visiting otherwise than through the spectacles of one of the distinguished authors who pen these entertaining volumes.

And thus, for want of the seeing eye, many a natural beauty lingers in obscurity.

Photo *M. E. Glaney.*
Wind and weather have cut this excellent likeness of Mr. Chamberlain in a rock on the bleak north Devon coast.

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The Lie Elaborate

The Story of a Great Cricketer.

Written and Illustrated by Hilda Cowham.

Some stuffy old buffer to take you for walks and spout French at you.

If your people go to the seaside for the summer holidays and it's any sort of a place, you can generally find several other fellows from your own or other schools to form a set. And if you do that, going to the seaside isn't bad fun; in fact, I like it better than going abroad.

Of course, when you go back next term it doesn't sound so swagger to say you've been to St. Margaret's Bay as it does to St. Malo; but it's a hollow sort of consolation, and a fellow with any real pride despises that sort of thing. Generally, also, when you go to an English seaside place you are certain of a good time with other fellows, and you can form a sporting set.

You can at any rate be quite sure that your governor won't dig out some stuffy old buffer to take you for walks in the morning and spout French at you, which is the low trick mine played on me at St. Malo.

We made up a very good set at Muntham, where we spent the summer vac. this year. There were about a dozen of us from various public schools. In a set like that there's always one man who takes the lead and sets the tone, and with us it was Grimwood who did it. He was a bit older than the rest of us, and perhaps that helped to make him popular.

In addition to that he was awfully good style, and seemed to like the right sort of things. His people, he said, were in India, and he was staying with his aunt, who was awfully rich and was going to leave him a pot of money. If he had a fault it was talking about himself; but he was so interesting and had done such ripping things that we easily forgave him.

When we asked him what school he went to, he explained that just at that time he wasn't going to any school. He let us into the secret that he had just been expelled from Eton, because he had been suspected of getting out of his dormitory windows at night and going to a pub. in Windsor. As a matter of fact, he explained, he hadn't been such an ass, but he knew who had.

This other fellow would not own up, so he himself had had to go, because, as he explained, "Etonians never gave one another away." We let him know by our limited admiration that this sort of thing was not peculiar to Etonians, but at the same time we liked him no worse for it.

I asked him one morning, while we sat on the sands and threw stones at a stick, whether he had known my cousin, Leicester Cumberland, at Eton.

"Little Leicester Cumberland?" he exclaimed. "I should think I did know him.

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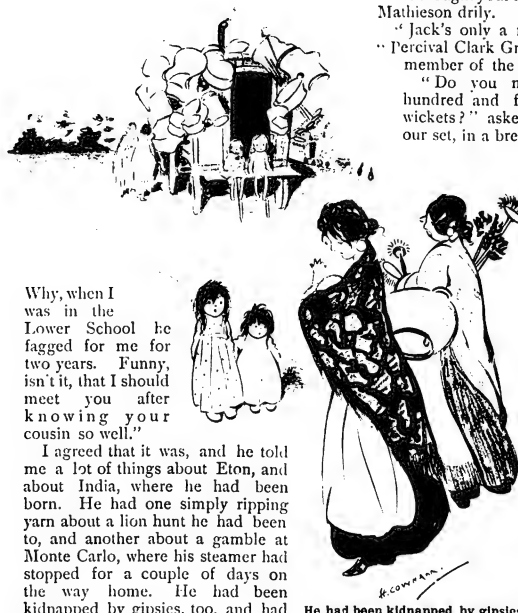

He had been kidnapped by gipsies, and had travelled nearly all over England with them.

Why, when I was in the Lower School he fagged for me for two years. Funny, isn't it, that I should meet you after knowing your cousin so well."

I agreed that it was, and he told me a lot of things about Eton, and about India, where he had been born. He had one simply ripping yarn about a lion hunt he had been to, and another about a gamble at Monte Carlo, where his steamer had stopped for a couple of days on the way home. He had been kidnapped by gipsies, too, and had travelled nearly all over England with them before he was found. You could hardly mention a thing without it reminded him of a yarn, and his talk was miles better than books.

Also there was one thing he could do. He could play cricket. The conversation turned on batting one day as we sat on the Parade listening to the band, and I suggested that good batsmen were hardly ever good bowlers. Some of the fellows disagreed, and tried to think of examples. Grimwood listened for a bit, and then he said:

"Well, there's a fellow called Grimwood—plays for this town. He can bat—he made a hundred and fourteen last week, and took seven wickets. How's that umpire!"

"Pretty good," I said. "Is he a relation of yours?"

"Yes, rather, and a pretty close one, too. You see he has the same initials as me—P. C."

"I thought your name was Jack," remarked Mathieson drily.

"Jack's only a nickname," he answered. "Percival Clark Grimwood, at your service. member of the Muntham Cricket Club."

"Do you mean that *you* made a hundred and fourteen and took seven wickets?" asked Harrington, another of our set, in a breathless way.

"What of it?" replied Grimwood lightly. "Why, when I was in India I knocked up two hundred and forty one day. But that was on a fiery wicket—it's jolly hot out there."

"It's jolly hot here," retorted Harrington. "I'll believe it when I see you do it."

"Sorry I can't oblige you now," was Grimwood's answer, "but the band might not like it. Perhaps you'll believe this."

He took a piece of newspaper from his pocket with a cricket score printed on it, and passed it round. It was the report of a match between Muntham and the M.C.C. And there as plain as a pikestaff was the score of 114 to the name of P. C. Grimwood, with seven wickets for fifty-two runs in the bowling analysis.

Grimwood was very decent about it. He accepted Harrington's apology, and went on with his tall cricket yarns as though nothing had happened.

"You'll be a useful man if we get up any matches," remarked Mathieson. "I suppose you'll be able to get away for a mid-week fixture if we get one up."

"Thanks," he replied. "I don't always play for the club, and I'd like to join in. But the truth is I rather overdid it in the M.C.C. match, and I shan't be playing again for a bit."

"Well, we're going to play a scratch game this evening on the sands," said Mathieson. "You come down and give us the benefit of your advice. We shan't be playing the 'Visitors *v.* Residents' match yet, but when

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we do you can consider yourself booked for the team. You needn't exert yourself—you'll be easily the best man there."

Grimwood was quite used to praise—men are who can do the thing as well as that. He didn't turn a hair, but quite modestly agreed to play.

He came down and watched us playing on the sands. I supposed he thought we were pretty rotten, for he didn't bother to coach us, and wouldn't even show Jones how to get that off-break he told us he had. But we often got him to talk about cricket afterwards, and he seemed to have had a great time playing whole-day matches. They would have played him against Harrow when he was at Eton if he hadn't sprained his ankle just before the match.

Muntham Visitors soon got going as a team, and played one or two matches against the visitors of neighbouring seaside places. We had one or two pretty fair public-school batsmen, and Jones was a good fast bowler, while in default of anything better I was put on to bowl lobs for catches.

We didn't trouble Grimwood very much, because he made such a favour of promising to play in our first match, and then he didn't turn up. He made the excuse that he'd mistaken the day, and Harrington, who captained the side, was so wild that he didn't ask him again. But when we had arranged the fixture with the Residents we had to rope him in.

Two fellows' people had gone home, and we were at our wits' end for men. We wanted to win, too, because the resident fellows were such a cocky lot. They kept very much to themselves and would hardly consent to know us, so we thought we ought to show them something in cricket as well as manners, just to keep our end up.

"I wish you'd play for us, Grimwood," remarked Harrington, as we came back from bathing. "There can't be much the matter with you now, and we're awfully hard up for bowling."

Grimwood muttered something about a previous engagement.

"Oh, rot! put it off," was the reply. "What's your beastly engagement?"

"I've got to take my aunt to the flower-show," he explained. "I promised I would, and I never go back on my word."

"No need to," I interjected. "The match is on Thursday, and the flower-show doesn't open till Friday. I saw it on the posters."

"Good!" exclaimed Harrington. "No more excuses now. Mind you turn up. Play begins at 2.30 sharp on the Town ground. You'd better come and have lunch with my people."

Grimwood agreed. I don't see what else he could have done. None the less I was distinctly relieved when he turned up with Harrington on the day of the match.

"He's a funny beggar," remarked Harrington to me. "I don't believe he wants to play at all. Fancy a fellow who's as good as that wanting to get out of a match. By Jove! if I could hit up a century against the M.C.C. I shouldn't want asking twice."

"Perhaps he doesn't think we're good enough," I suggested.

"If he's the sportsman he

"I wish you'd play for us, Grimwood," remarked Harrington, as we came back from bathing.

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Meanwhile, we sat in the pavilion and clapped and cheered whenever one of our men got a hit in.

makes out, that ought not to matter. Anyhow, I'm glad we've got him. It'll make the other fellows buck up to be playing in the same team with him."

The Residents lost the toss, and we sent in a slogger named Wilton and a stonewaller named Horniman to see if we could break the back of the bowling. Meanwhile, we sat in the pavilion and clapped and cheered whenever one of our men got a hit in. I was due in first wicket down, and sat ready in my pads waiting to go in; I knew Wilton's pace was too hot to last.

Grimwood sat a few yards away from me, and I noticed with some surprise that he was more nervous than a fellow with his experience of big cricket ought to be. Wilton made some lovely little hits before he was caught in the long field for sixteen, and then I went in. The bowling hadn't looked difficult from the pavilion, but the wicket was very tricky, and I grieve to say that I got out for a duck. That's a matter of luck with a player like myself; one wicket is very much like another if the bowling is good. But I consoled myself with the thought that it was just the wicket for Grimwood. Our luck would be out indeed if he didn't make a score.

"I don't know what's the matter with the fellow," said Harrington to me when he borrowed my pads and strapped them on, "but he's in a blue funk. Goodness knows what about. He's tried every dodge he knows to get away from the pavilion, and we won't let him. The side jolly well depends on him. Keep your eye on him, there's a good chap—go and sit next to him with Mathieson till he goes in."

Harrington went away, and began to play a rattling good innings, which ended with a skyer at thirty-six. I didn't see much of it, as I was keeping Grimwood interested in the game, or in anything I could get him to talk about. When Harrington came out the next two wickets went quickly, and Grimwood's turn came. You would hardly believe it, but he was so jumpy that we had to show him how to put his pads on. However, he seemed all right when he walked up to the wicket.

"Now you'll see some cricket, sir," I remarked to a gentleman who had been watching the game as Grimwood took middle.

"Shall I?" he replied. "I'm glad to hear it. Who's your friend?"

"Why, that's Grimwood," I answered.

"By Jove! What on earth's he doing?" exclaimed Mathieson. The Residents' fast bowler sent down a ball almost wide to leg, which anybody, let alone a Grimwood, ought

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to have put nicely to the boundary. Grimwood actually ran backward several yards when it was coming, and ducked to avoid it as it rose at him!

"Cricket, did you say," said the gentleman to me. "Are you sure you didn't mean rounders?"

"Our man seems rather off colour to-day, sir," explained Harrington. "I can't understand it. He's Grimwood. He belongs to the town club, and made a century against the M.C.C. at the beginning of the holidays, besides taking seven wickets. He showed us it in the paper."

"Did he?" was the reply. "Funny thing, I didn't happen to see him doing it. There was only one century in the match, and that was made by Mr. Grimwood."

"But that is Mr. Grimwood," I put in.

The gentleman's eyes twinkled. "So he may be," he replied; "but, if so, the runs were made by another person of the same name."

At that moment our remarks were interrupted by a silence. Grimwood was out for no runs after five minutes of the rottenest cricket ever played. Fortunately for him, Ward, who was in with him, had soon sized him up. He did the batting, and didn't run the odd run if it left Grimwood to play. It was quite clear the fellow had no idea of cricket; the first straight ball got him. Nobody gave him even a consolation clapping.

"Sorry you didn't get your century," remarked Harrington drily, as Grimwood took his pads off. "It doesn't seem to be your day."

"Beastly sorry," replied Grimwood nervously. "I'm afraid I don't feel up to it. Do you mind if I go home? I'm not very well."

He looked as brown as a nut, and particularly fit, only very uncomfortable. But Harrington was rather annoyed, after all the trouble he had taken, to find himself made a fool of.

"You may just as well, for all the good you are," he said. "The sooner the better."

"One moment, Mr. Grimwood," said the gentleman we had been talking to. "I understand from my friends here that you made a century in the match against the M.C.C."

Grimwood faced him. "I don't know what you're talking about," he said, with his glance wandering about awkwardly. "What's it got to do with you if I did?"

"Only that there seem to be two of us."

Grimwood—our Grimwood—fled. I don't know where he fled to, because after the rest of our wickets had fallen like summer rain I had to stay and witness from square leg the painful spectacle of the Residents knocking our bowling all over the field. They won hands down, and were awfully rude about teams whose men can't play, and go home in the middle of a match.

We saw no more of Grimwood during the rest of the vac. He disappeared from Muntham, and we did not go to the trouble of finding out anything more about him. The real Mr. Grimwood, who turned out to be secretary of the Town Club, disclaimed any relationship, and said he didn't believe the fellow's name was Grimwood at all.

Next term I had a letter from Harrington, telling me that he'd met an Eton man who told him that there had been no such person in the school. I was really not surprised, although he did say he had tagged my cousin Leicester Cumberland. For, first of all, if he had been in the Lower School at Eton he would have been fagged himself, and wouldn't have been allowed to fag other fellows. And, secondly, I hadn't got a cousin called Leicester Cumberland, who consequently hadn't been at Eton with him or anybody else.

Thirdly and lastly, he would probably have known a little more about cricket and a little less about—embroidery.

"I don't know what's the matter with the fellow," said Harrington to me.

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Real Life Romances.

The Editor is Always Glad to Purchase Real Life Romances Which are True, and Five Hundred Words in Length.

Peace—Yet War.

THE TRAGEDY OF A RUSSIAN PATROL.

WAR was ended. The soldier smoked his pipe at ease, idly dreaming of happier days to come. Before him, westward, lay the German Empire, and there the Georgenburg frontier station with its eagle flag unfurled. His back leant against a flag-staff of the Tsar, and the green, wooded land of his country stretched far behind him.

Here all was suggestive of peace, save in the blood-red glow of the setting sun. And that, too, would soon be blotted out in the darkness of the summer night.

A bugle-call rang out. The Russian shook the ashes from his pipe, and, rifle in hand, himself added a third man to the small patrol. A corporal made the fourth, and, under his command, the men set out from the station.

The crimson glow in the west paled to a steely-blue, and a few stars blinked in the darkening sky. Now the patrol was marching through the forest. Their footsteps crunched harshly in the stillness, and the owl hooted as it made its silent flight.

At an open space in the trees the corporal called a halt. A grunt of satisfaction fell from his three subordinates, as they cast down their heavy knapsacks and prepared to bivouac.

Suddenly, a long-drawn-out wail broke in upon their occupation. The men paused, and glanced with some alarm at the corporal. It was succeeded by another—louder, and evidently nearer.

Each man drew his sword and strove to ward off the monster that . . . . snapped furiously at his throat.

The corporal laid a hand on his rifle, as a sound of breaking twigs rose from the undergrowth. Again that same howl struck chill in every vein. A deadly terror lay at each man's heart. Away in the Far East they had fought, but with no such fear as this.

Closer and closer the snapping of undergrowth told of their fast-approaching enemy. More firmly each man gripped his rifle, and strained to pierce the blackness of the bush. The Japanese gave quarter; not so the Russian wolf—fierce, swift, and hungering for their flesh. Two rifles spoke as one, then all four belched forth their flame. The long, black silhouettes of six huge wolves tore round them. Again and again the soldiers fired, but the darkness spoilt their aim.

Two wolves rolled over in the scrub. Yet undaunted the remaining four came on. Now rifles were discarded. At such close battle they proved useless. Each man drew his sword, and tried to ward off the monster that, balancing itself on hind legs, snapped furiously at his throat.

A quarter of an hour the fight thus raged. The corporal had fallen already. Victory was leaning towards the wolves. Now one of the soldiers, snatching his great coat from the ground, cast it over the head of the wolf that was attacking him. Now he slashed at the creature with his sword, then, turning, climbed frantically the nearest tree.

And he alone of the four survived to tell the tale.

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The Death Train.

THE STORY OF A GREAT SACRIFICE.

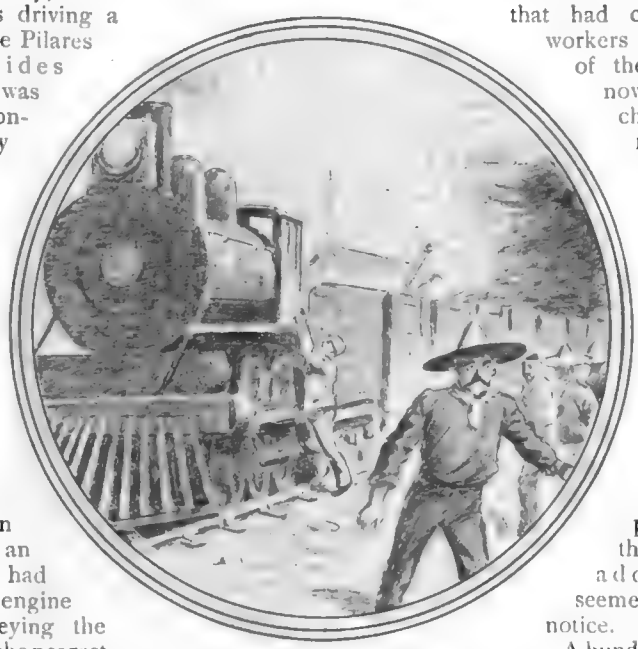
HEROISM now is not usually set forth in such dramatic or inspiring surroundings as it was in Nero's days. But for all that it is as great and noble as ever it was, although many declare that we live in a decadent age.

Here is a story which will bear out the previous statement. The hero was James Garcia, a Mexican engine-driver, who was employed on the Rio Grande Railway. His deed, had it been performed in classic days, would probably have provided a theme for the muses. One day, a few months ago, Garcia was driving a goods train to the Pilares Mine. Besides machinery there was on board a considerable quantity of blasting powder.

At mid-day the train had drawn up at Nacozari, and Garcia was awaiting the signal to resume his journey. Suddenly a brakesman rushed up shouting frantically that the train was on fire. In an instant Garcia had leapt from his engine and was surveying the danger. The trucks nearest to those containing the blasting-powder were blazing furiously. Men were rushing up with water. But it was hopeless to save the train. Garcia turned his eyes towards the little mountain town.

What would be its fate when the fire reached the powder trucks? No doubt, as he looked, he realised the whole scene; the fearful explosion followed by the instant destruction of the town and its inhabitants. About him the men seemed to have gone mad. Of what use was water now? Only one hope remained to save the town. But who would dare?

A great resolve came to Garcia. Turning abruptly, he climbed up on to the engine. The fireman was awaiting him on the box. Garcia ordered him to descend. The man hesitated. Garcia pushed him on to the track. Then he pulled a lever.



Turning abruptly, he climbed up on to the engine.

The crowd of officials who were still working frantically in the hope of checking the fire heard a shrill, warning whistle. What was happening? They paused spell-bound in their work. The train was moving—the terrible train that would soon have blown them and the whole town to destruction.

Bit by bit, gaining speed at every yard, the train moved on. The silence that had come upon the workers at the thought of the great sacrifice now gave way to cheers. Everyone realised that Garcia meant to save the town. Forgetful of the danger, men rushed towards the engine, wildly voicing their enthusiasm. But Garcia, his whole attention occupied in raking up the furnaces and adding speed, seemed scarcely to notice.

A hundred eyes followed the train, straining their utmost to penetrate the heavy, pungent trail of smoke. Every thought was centred on the man toiling at the furnace, driving on to death. But would Garcia get clear of the town in time? Even the onlookers half-a-mile distant from the burning train trembled to think of their fate should he fail.

* * * * *

A deafening roar filled the air. A dense volume of smoke mingled with huge masses of iron and *débris* shot high into the heavens. Every window in Nacozari was broken, but that was all. The town was saved, and Garcia should for ever be its hero.

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THE ROMANCE OF A POLICE-COURT SUMMONS.

TO a certain aged widow who lives in a humble cottage near Brentford, the arrival of a dog came as a ray of sunshine between dark clouds. It dispelled the loneliness of the hours whilst her son toiled at his work. It was her only friend, the only thing that loved her beyond her son.

Food was far from plentiful in the little cottage. A loaf of bread, a little butter, more often dripping, supplied their daily wants. Yet all three shared alike. Three potatoes and three-quarters of a pound of meat were provided on Sundays; of this the widow took one-third, her son one-third, and the dog one-third.

One evening the widow's eyes were dim with weeping. Even the dog appeared to know that trouble was present, and clung closely to his mistress' side. That morning a policeman had called at the cottage, and—and — raising her apron to her eyes, she handed her son an ominous looking document.

A summons — no license for the dog! A coldness clung around the labourer's heart. But he met the trouble bravely, and tried to smile away his mother's fears.

"Don't fret, mother. I'll raise the seven and sixpence all right," he declared. But how and from where he knew not.

A week later the old woman stood at the rickety gate of her little garden anxiously awaiting her son's return. That morning he had gone to the Brentford police-court. Oh, what would they say? Would they take the dog away from her? She trembled at the thought. A man approached.

"What did they say, lad?" asked the old woman eagerly.

"It ain't no good tryin' to hide things from ye, mother," the man answered ruefully. "They've fined me seven-an'-twenty shillings. But"—he added hopefully—"they've given me time to pay."

A cry burst from his mother. Twenty-seven shillings. Where could they find all the money? Where? Still, from that moment the whole thoughts of the little family were bent to raise those seven-and-twenty shillings. If at times the pinch of hunger showed on their faces, their hearts bounded with satisfaction at the thought that the little bag in the cupboard was some pence nearer the sum of their ambition.

Then a joyous morning dawned. Trembling with excitement the old woman counted the many coins—27s. in all. She then wrapped the money in a scrap of paper, and bravely faced the six long miles of road that lay between the cottage and Brentford police-court.

The old woman left the witness-box on the arm of an usher.

Wearied but triumphant she slowly stepped into the witness-box, and extending her withered hands displayed the packet.

A policeman handed it to the clerk, and a hush fell upon the court, whilst the clerk spoke earnestly to the magistrates.

"A genuine case of extreme poverty?"—a nod. Then the presiding magistrate turned to the frail old woman in the witness-box.

"The Bench has, under the circumstances, decided to remit your son's fine," he announced.

Dazed with joy the old woman left the witness-box on the arm of an usher.

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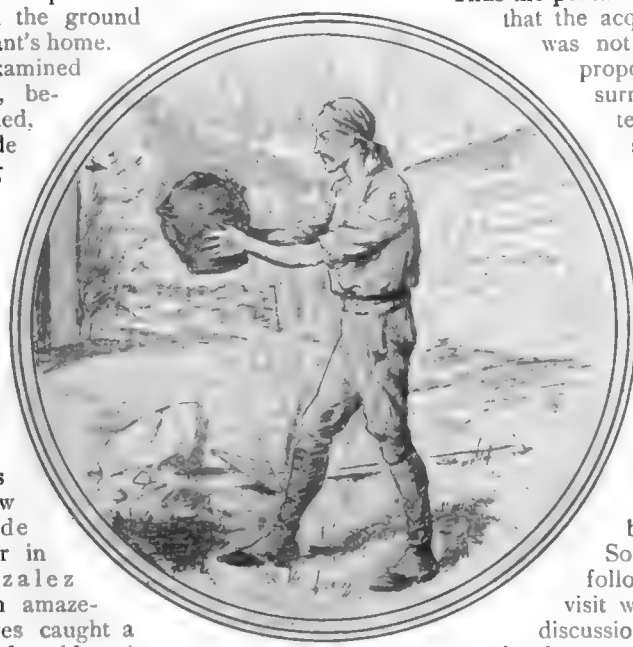
A Stroke of Luck.

A ROMANCE OF HIDDEN TREASURE.

THE following story tells of one of Dame Fortune's little wiles. And it shows that sometimes when she appears to be smiling her brightest she is really scowling her hardest. First let us describe her prey.

He was a peasant of Colemenar in Spain, Andres Gonzalez by name. Until a few months ago Gonzalez had lived contentedly in a cottage, paying his rent regularly, and troubled with no thoughts. One day, however, Dame Fortune hurled her shaft. It took form in a little idea, which resolved itself about a certain piece of stone protruding from the ground near by the peasant's home.

Gonzalez examined the stone, and, becoming interested, fetched a spade and began to dig around it. In a few minutes he unearthed a pot incrusted with soil and firmly closed at the top. Its weight surprised him, and, filled with expectation, he carried it into his cottage. A blow from his spade smashed the jar in pieces. Gonzalez stepped back in amazement as his eyes caught a glimmering of gold coins lying among the *débris*. He felt like a man in a dream, so unexpectedly had wealth come upon him.



In a few minutes he unearthed a pot incrusted with soil.

The same evening the peasant sat up late into the night discussing with his wife and brother and sister-in-law his good fortune. Of course, now they would have to leave the cottage, and they would buy a farm, and breed cattle, and employ men, and Gonzalez and his brother would in a little time grow as rich as the farmer who paid them their paltry hire. Such was one of the visions that possession of the treasure created. But, above all, it was decided no one must know how the money was obtained. And both women agreed to keep the secret.

On the next day Gonzalez and his brother went to Madrid and there sold the treasure to a dealer for some four hundred pounds. So far everything had proceeded smoothly. But a few days after the sale a lawyer called at the cottage. Briefly he informed the peasant that the secret had been betrayed. Gonzalez's wife had told some of her neighbours, and thus bit by bit it had reached the ears of the landlord, who now demanded, as was his right by Spanish law, half the value of the treasure.

Thus the peasant began to realise that the acquisition of riches was not without its due proportion of care. To surrender half was a terrible loss, but it seemed inevitable. So that morning Gonzalez sadly watched the lawyer depart with half his precious find. Still, two hundred pounds seemed a vast sum of money, and very fair visions of future prosperity could be raised by it. So the days that followed the lawyer's visit were filled with the discussion of plans as to the best means of investing the money. However, Dame Fortune, thinking, it may be, that she had carried her joke far enough, now stepped in — this time in the form of a summons for Gonzalez to appear before the magistrates. The charge brought against him was one of concealing treasure-trove. It was easily proved, and Gonzalez gained for his discovery of the gold neither wealth, nor land, nor happiness, but six months' imprisonment.

Thus what at first appeared to be the veriest good fortune proved in the end to be one of the worst of misfortunes.

But it is from such hard lessons that wisdom is learnt, for which no price is too heavy.

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MR. X —HIS PAGES.

Oh June, June, June, attractive June:
Delightful month when, all a-quiver
The roses nod, and minstrels tune
Their twanging banjos by the sea
Upon whose marge the bathers shiver
Or plunge in hardily.

Thou bringest no divine emotion
To "Mr. X," no train conveys
Him West, to wander by the ocean
Or eke to slack upon the beach.
Instead, he spends laborious days
A-jest, for all and each.

Puzzle Penknives, Puzzle Purses, or **Packs of ROYAL Playing Cards,** will be given **as prizes to readers who forward *new* puzzles problems, or other tricks which are inserted in this feature.** All readers communicating with "Mr. X." and wishing for a reply **must** inclose a stamped, addressed envelope. Letters should be addressed to "Mr. X" (care of THE ROYAL MAGAZINE), 18 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

COMPETITION RESULT.

IN THE ROYAL MAGAZINE for February "Mr. X" offered a prize of 5s. and ten consolation prizes for the longest lists of words entirely made up of other words sent him on a postcard.

Dizzy from reading countless postcards covered with minute handwriting, and driven frantic at the mere mention of a dictionary, "Mr. X" has much pleasure in announcing the result of what is by far the most popular competition he has had for many a year.

He would like first, however, to implore competitors to read the conditions of a contest carefully, and to read over their attempts before posting them. Here are a few points which struck him in this particular competition:

Some competitors sent in large sheets of paper in envelopes, thus seeking an unfair advantage and being disqualified.

Some gave their names and addresses, and some didn't.

Some wrote legibly, but others did not, and, in addition, arranged their words in tasteful mosaic patterns, which made the task of counting them a nightmare.

Some perpetrated errors in spelling, in spite of having the dictionary before them.

Occasionally a competitor mentioned his or her age, especially if of tender years, in order to soften "Mr. X's" hard and stony heart.

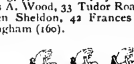
One young lady, dwelling in bonnie Scotland, ended her list with the plea: "Edit-or for-get-me-not!" Alas! she could only find seventy-five words, and, with a sigh, "Mr. X" placed her card among the majority.

"Mr. X" has much pleasure in awarding 5s. to—

J. E. Goodland, Kilkenny House, Taunton (450 words).

Consolation prizes are awarded to:

Miss J. S. Cole, Roslan, Porthleven, Cornwall (437).
Miss E. O. Halford, Layer de la Haye, Colchester (340).
W. B. Dove, 29 May Street, Bothwell Road, Hamilton, N.B. (241).
C. Tice, Maine A, Christ's Hospital, Horsham, Sussex (224).
Francis Garbett, Fairholme, Stanford Avenue, Hassocks, Sussex (189).
W. Peddie, care of Mrs. Dow, Church Street, Callander, N.B. (187).
F. Croxall, 6 Orchard Street, Burton-on-Trent (180).
M. F. Strong, 77 Silverdale, Sydenham, S.E. (108)
Miss Doris A. Wood, 33 Tudor Road, Canterbury (102).
Miss Helen Sheldon, 42 Frances Road, Handsworth, Birmingham (100).



Q. Why is a rooster on a fence like a penny?
A. Because his head is on one side and his tail is on the other.

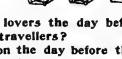
A TERRIBLE TRAGEDY?

GWENDOLEN: "Oh, Ermyntrude, I have just seen a nursemaid wheel a perambulator with two children off the end of the pier!"

ERMYNTRUDE: "Reptile! Infanticide! She shall be brought to justice."

GWENDOLEN: "Oh, Ermyntrude, don't get excited; it was off the shore end."

(Ermyntrude seizes a cushion, and Gwendolen is brought to justice.)



Q. Why are lovers the day before their wedding the fastest of travellers?
A. Because on the day before their wedding they are at the Cape of Good Hope, and on the next day they arrive in the United States.

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Strange But True.

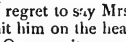
Hicks: "Jones' wooden leg has been giving him intense pain."

Wicks: "Now, Hicks, none of your foolish joking, please. How can a wooden leg give him pain?"

Hicks: "I regret to say Mrs. Jones forgot herself, and hit him on the head with it."

Wicks: "Or was it a case of natural affinity. Ha! Ha!"

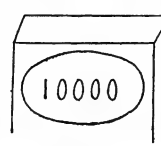
Hicks (with bitter scorn): "Ho! Ho!"



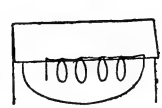
A Figure Puzzle.

Can you write 10000 inclosed in a ring, as in the first illustration, without lifting the pen from the paper?

Of course, the task is literally impossible, but there is a very plausible solution, and it is a fine sell to worry a friend with on a wet day, such as we get in June. When the victim has become weary of attempting an impossible feat, you may "show him how," as follows: Bend over the top of a sheet of paper and write 10000, and carry a line round from the last 0, as in the second illustration. Then turn up the portion of your paper previously bent down, and complete the marvel.

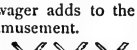


No. 1.



No. 2.

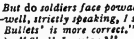
A small wager adds to the attraction of this simple amusement.



Q. What is the difference between a lady and a soldier?

A. One powders the face, and the other faces the powder.

[Ed. Royal: "*But* do *soldiers face powder?*"
Mr. X.: "*Er—well, strictly speaking, I suppose . . .*"
Ed. Royal: "'*Bullets*' *is more correct.*"
Mr. X. *(humbly)*: "*Shall I resign?*"
(Ed. Royal *embraces him with tears.*)]



A Knotty Question.

There was once a monastery of which it was boasted that a lie had never been told within its walls. Curiously enough, this boast was well founded; a lie never *had* been told within its walls.

But one day a monk rushed into the great hall where all the brothers were assembled, crying: "A lie has been told in this monastery!"

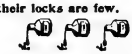
Was he telling a lie?

WHAT?

"Pay attention Johnny," said May.
"Pay attention and hark:
What did the spider do, should you say,
When he came out of the Ark?"
Johnny suppressed a weary sigh
And, shaking his curly head:
"I think the spider took a fly
And went away home," he said.

Q. Why are the houses of bald people easiest to break into?

A. Because their locks are few.



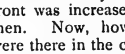
A Military Problem.

"Do you belong to the Territorial Army, Williams?" inquired Shooter, twirling his moustache in a dashing, soldierlike way.

"No," meekly responded Williams.

"Ha!" said Shooter, "I do. And a funny thing happened at a drill the other night. Our Captain formed us into a solid square, and then changed the formation to one of a hollow square, two deep. Someone noticed that by this change the front was increased by only two men. Now, how many of us were there in the company?"

Williams threw up his hands in horror at the question. How many men *were* there?



Would You Like Five Shillings?

"Mr. X's" readers, though affectionate, do not send him as many "catches" as he would like. By "catches," he means such trifles as "Strange But True," and "A Terrible Tragedy."

Therefore, to encourage the laggards, "Mr. X" offers a prize of Five Shillings for what is in his opinion the best "catch," reaching him *on a postcard* before June 20th, 1908, and ten packs of cards for the ten next best. Needless to say all "catches" must be new.

Postcards should be addressed to "Mr. X," care of The Royal Magazine, 18 Henrietta Street, London, W.C., and marked "Catch" on the address side.

ANSWERS.

A Knotty Question: The only way to put the answer is that the monk was lying when he started to speak, and not lying when he had finished.

A Military Problem: 61 men.

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A Racing Story.

When Mr. Paul Theodore Benskin boarded the motor omnibus at the corner of the road wherein was his suburban lodging, he knew that he had started upon the journey that would make or mar his career.

He was a meek, nervous-looking young man, and he apologised to passengers right and left as he struggled along the narrow gangway to get to the one vacant seat in the front of the 'bus.

He asked for a ticket to London Bridge, examining it carefully. Then, having placed two pennies with grave deliberation in the conductor's hand, he sat back in his seat and became lost in thought.

If only his aunt could be persuaded to lend him the necessary two hundred pounds! The little shop with the good position in the High Street would be his, the young lady from the ribbon department in the Oxford Street Stores would become his wife. He could give up his position as junior London traveller to the same firm, and commence on his own account, then——

The stores where he was employed were extensive, but they were small in comparison with the huge block of buildings he saw pictured that bore the name of Benskin. "Benskin's Bazaar" would be alliterative, but sounded rather cheap. "The World's——"

The 'bus skidding on the slippery wood pavement in Bishopsgate Street nearly shot him from his seat and effectively brought him back to earth.

"I don't suppose I shall get it," he muttered gloomily; then, finding he had not forgotten to bring a few cloves, he lit a cheap cigarette and puffed at it in a dejected manner as the 'bus began to cross the bridge—amongst other things his aunt objected to smoking.

Miss Selina Benskin, a lady of uncertain age and strict views, with a more than comfortable bank balance, had some six months ago taken unto herself a husband. Paul had never seen and knew nothing of this gentleman, but he felt that he was responsible for no satisfactory answer coming to his repeated letters asking for help. Paul had always been his aunt's favourite nephew, and had been held up by her as a model young man. The husband had evidently opposed the suggested loan. And on the loan depended everything, for Mr. Benskin's twenty pounds savings bank balance, and ten pounds in gold upon his person—a commission account paid the previous evening—represented his whole wealth.

As Mr. Benskin hurried to the booking-office of London Bridge, he said things about the husband of his aunt, and the phraseology was not that which a model young man should have used.

"Third return, Lingwick," he demanded at the booking-office."

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"Ordinary?" queried the clerk.

"Of course," said Mr. Benskin, then hastily: "Oh—er—is there a cheap ticket for the day?"

"Not if you're going by the 10.30. There's a cheap race special at 11.15."

On further inquiries, discovering that the difference in fares was slight, he took an ordinary ticket and hurried along to the platform.

His aunt had moved to Lingwick, a pretty little town in Surrey, some twenty odd miles from London, on her marriage, and he had not seen the new house yet. He remembered now that at the time someone had said there was a racecourse there.

"I'm glad I came early," said the young man with a sigh of relief, as he seated himself in an almost empty carriage. "It would have been horrible to have had to travel with a crowd of sinful racegoers."

From which remark it may be assumed that Mr. Benskin had been carefully brought up.

On arriving at Lingwick he had no difficulty in finding his aunt's house, a pretty little country villa quite close to the station. A servant informed him that his aunt was out.

"Out!" gasped Mr. Benskin, "out, but she knew I was coming, and wrote saying she would be in."

"Yes, sir," said the girl, "but she had to attend an important missionary meeting in London. She said she would be back about five, and would you come then. Missis said there are a lot of pretty country walks round about, sir, and the air would do you good."

"Y—yes," stammered Mr. Benskin. He was not delighted at the prospect of walking about for five hours. "But—er, is Mr. Richards in?"

"No, sir. 'E went to see the missis off by train; then he came back and said 'e shouldn't be in to lunch. We don't expect HIM back till tea time."

"Thank you," murmured the young man, and with a sigh he walked down the neatly-kept garden path.

It was about twelve o'clock. What on earth could he find to do? Then he would have the unexpected expense of lunch. Where could he obtain it? The latter question he solved by entering a small confectioner's shop and partaking of a cheap if not sumptuous meal of roll and butter and coffee.

Then as he came out of the shop the other question that had been troubling him was answered.

On the station wall right opposite him was a placard announcing that the Lingwick Park Race Meeting was being held that day.

Mr. Benskin flushed at the sudden thought. Go to a race meeting! What would his aunt say if she knew?

A special train glided into the station, and discharged its load; a stream of people emerged and hurried towards the big white gates a few yards farther along the road.

The young man hesitated—and was lost.

After all, he argued, a race meeting would be a new experience for him, and every man needed experience. His aunt had said the country air would do him good; he would be getting the air in the beautiful park in which the course was situated.

Mr. Benskin strolled slowly after the disappearing crowd. There could be no harm in attending the meeting. Of course he would not bet, and he could truthfully tell his aunt he had been for a walk in the country.

"How much?" he asked the man in the little wooden box by the gate.

"Half-a-crown," said the official laconically, "and another half-crown for the silver ring."

Mr. Benskin produced the necessary coin, and thanking him for his information entered the ground, his heart beating quickly. What sort of place was this resort of gamblers and the scum of the earth?

The young man stared around him with mingled feelings of surprise and disappointment.

There was very little excitement round him. Everyone seemed to be making for the row of tall buildings a long way down the course from which came a hubbub of shouting. Except for the white rails beside the narrow path he was on, there was nothing to show that the place was a racecourse. Not a horse or a jockey was in sight.

Clearly, thought Mr. Benskin, the correct thing to do was to pay another half-crown and enter the mysterious "silver ring" the man had spoken of. He increased his pace. Had the races already started?

It was three-quarters of a mile to the stands, and Mr. Benskin was somewhat out of breath when he reached them. An obliging policeman showed him where he could enter, and the young man paid half-a-crown, plus another sixpence for a race card, which he also presumed was the correct thing to do; and, flushed with excitement, entered the inclosure which is known as the "small" or "silver" ring.

Here at last was something of what he had

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expected to see. Bookmakers attired in clothes as "loud" as their voices were rending the air with deafening shouts. "I'll lay three to one the field. Three to one you don't spot the winner."

A big man, with the face of a prize fighter and a peculiar, shrieking voice, was shouting himself hoarse. "Gather round, gather round. Five to one the field, bar one. All the big pri-ces."

Mr. Benskin stood dumfounded. All the proceedings were a mystery to him. He saw men hand money to the loud-voiced gentlemen, who proclaimed their names to the world at large by wearing big cards in their hats, and he saw them receive tickets on which they scribbled something, and slipped them in their pockets. No one seemed to stand still, and never was there silence. There was an air of suppressed excitement about that was infectious, and the young man, who had never up to the present been near a race-course, found himself longing for the racing to commence.

About ten minutes after he had entered the inclosure the saddling bell rang, and then some numbers and names were hoisted up on a board close to him.

Mr. Benskin consulted his card, and found that the numbers coincided with the numbers placed next to the horses' names on the card. The other information, he presumed, was the names of the jockeys who were riding. The card also gave the colours, and Mr. Benskin thought in passing that some of them were very pretty.

The roaring was louder now; a firm favourite had been established.

"Evens Flitaway," roared the bookies, and Mr. Benskin, consulting his card, discovered that Flitaway's colours were white, blue sleeves, and blue cap. Having no financial interest in the race, he resolved to follow the fortune of the horse whose name seemed to be on everyone's lips.

Then the horses galloped past to the starting-gate. Mr. Benskin thought that Flitaway looked a fine horse, but so did all the others.

"Three to one bar one. Sevens Kingshall. Eights An——"

Mr. Benskin had keen eyesight. He saw a wire in front of where the horses were standing flash up; then ting, ting, ting went a bell somewhere near.

"They're off!" shouted someone, and then came a dead silence, startling in its suddenness.

The young draper's traveller followed the race eagerly. Suddenly, half-way down the course, he saw the white and blue leap forward and join the two horses who had been leading.

"The favourite wins," shouted an excited, portly little man standing near him.

"No, Kingshall's got him. He's held, he's held," roared someone down by the rails.

Then like a flash a jumble of colours had passed him.

"Flitaway's got it," he heard the little man announce delightedly.

Three numbers went up on the board. No. 8 was on top. Eight was Flitaway. The little man's excitement had interested Mr. Benskin. He followed him, anxious to see if he had made any money.

As the little man approached a bookmaker who was roaring out: "Who wants any money?" the hoarse cry "All right" went round, and a flag was hoisted on the number board.

Mr. Benskin, with envious eyes, saw the portly man draw a little heap of sovereigns. And the portly man turning round noticed his envious glance.

"Lucky to get on early," he said, putting the money in his breast-pocket and buttoning his coat.

"Yes," agreed Mr. Benskin, without the least idea of what he meant.

There was a lull in the excitement now. The race had been a bad one for the layers of odds, and they were too busy paying away to be able to start immediately the betting on the next event.

Mr. Benskin was beginning to feel at home now. He looked at his card, and found the next race was a mile. Then something caused him to start. In glancing down the names of the horses, his glance had been arrested at number sixteen—Paul Pry. At school his nickname had been Paul Pry, due to an abnormally-developed sense of curiosity. The old name coming before him in these surroundings startled him. He was a somewhat superstitious man. Could it be a good omen?

The numbers had gone up on the board. He turned to the little, portly man, who was thoughtfully consulting his race card.

"Is the jockey riding No. 16 a good one?" he asked him.

"Eh?" said the other, then laughed, and looked up at the number board. "Oh, yes, he's a good apprentice; but the horse is a rank outsider."

"Thank you," said Mr. Benskin politely.

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Then he moved away, and stood wrestling with a great temptation.

The bookies had commenced business again. They were marking figures in chalk beside the names of the horses on their boards.

"There will be no harm in seeing what the odds are," murmured Mr. Benskin faintly to himself, and he walked up guiltily to where the big man with the shrieking voice was standing.

Seven horses were running, fewer than half those entered for the race. The odds against three of them were small, but there in white against the printed name of Paul Pry was the figure twenty, and Mr. Benskin understood that if the horse won his backer would draw twenty pounds for every pound invested.

The bookie's business had slackened; only two or three people were near him. He noticed Mr. Benskin standing in a hesitating manner close to him.

"Now then, sir, what's your fancy?" Mr. Benskin, tempted so suddenly, fell.

"What can I have on Paul Pry?" he asked timidly.

"Why, anythin' yer like, sir," said the bookie with a grin. "Say a fiver for a good-looking swell like you."

"What can I have on Paul Pry?" he asked timidly.

Mr. Benskin remembered the ten pounds in gold, the commission account he had forgotten to leave at home.

In the excitement of the moment he produced five sovereigns, and placed them in the bookie's big hand.

The man carelessly slipped them into the big leather wallet he wore at his waist.

"Five quid to one 'undred Paul Pry," he said to his clerk, "and the number o' the ticket is 516."

Mr. Benskin found himself staring dazedly at a piece of pasteboard, which bore a very flattering portrait of the gentleman who had taken his money, and the three numerals mentioned in red.

He had betted! He stood to lose five pounds! What would his aunt say if she knew? Suppose Paul Pry lost, where was he to——

His thoughts were interrupted by the horses going up to the starting-gate. He recognised Paul Pry by the green and yellow jacket and green cap. The animal was a big, ugly chestnut colt, but his workmanlike appearance

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was favourably commented on and found him a few backers.

If he won, thought Mr. Benskin, as he impatiently waited for the start, he would have a hundred pounds to draw. With a hundred pounds he could——

The horses presented a pretty picture in the bright spring sunshine as they manœuvred round the starting-gate in the distance. Mr. Benskin was trembling. Would they never be off? He heard nothing of the hoarse roar around him. His heart seemed to be standing still, and his eyes were glued on those seven horses clustered by the white posts nearly a mile away.

Then ting, ting, ting went the bell. Again came the cry: "They're off!" only this time to Benskin it seemed a roar, then silence, and he could almost hear the faint beating of his heart.

"The favourite got off badly," he heard a man near him growl, as the horses in a bunch came flying down the course.

Two horsey-looking young fellows standing just in front were following the race eagerly through their field-glasses.

"Who's the green and yellow?" one of them asked.

The other dropped his glasses for a moment and consulted his card.

"Er—Paul Pry—an outsider. Why?"

"Running well," said the other laconically.

Down they came. With a beating heart the nervous young man saw that his horse was, at all events, near the front. The little, portly man had drawn near him.

"Citron wins!" he cried, then an instant later: "Yes—no—by gad, that green and yellow will——"

Benskin's heart was in his mouth. The horses flashed past. He dimly saw the green and yellow, coming up along the rails, thunder past the black and scarlet. Then came a groan from a man near him. "Who wants any money?" yelled the bookmakers derisively, and the next moment three numbers went up. Sixteen was the top one—his horse had won!

The bookmakers were chuckling; even the big man with the squeaky voice looked comparatively happy, when Mr. Benskin went up and modestly demanded a hundred pounds. He counted out twenty five-pound notes.

"Here you are; s'welp me, you're a greenhorn, but I play fair. Didn't you know you got yer stake back?"

He tossed over five sovereigns, and Mr. Benskin thanked him and moved away; clearly all bookmakers were not so bad as they were painted.

A voice behind him made him turn. It was the portly man.

"Got a tip for the next race?" he asked with great respect. He had been a witness of the sensational transaction.

"N—no, I'm sorry," said Mr. Benskin, and he hurried towards the exit. His brain was in a whirl, but he was sensible enough to go away at once; he would not stop and risk losing what he had made. Although he had been successful in his first bet, he knew that the chances were he would be equally unsuccessful in his second. He had had a gigantic stroke of luck; he would not presume upon it.

* * * * *

It was about three when he found himself on the main road, for he had stopped to witness the start of another race, and had been deeply interested therein.

Once out in the country road again, away from all the noise and excitement, he could hardly credit that he had been to a race meeting and won a hundred pounds. He unbuttoned his coat and examined the notes to make certain he was not the victim of a delusion.

For the two hours he had to wait he wandered aimlessly round the country lanes dreaming of what he could do with the hundred pounds. He longed to get back to London and tell the young lady in the ribbon department of the Stores of his good fortune, but he must see his aunt first.

True, he only needed a hundred pounds now, but if he could get two so much the better; the extra hundred would be useful—very useful.

It was shortly after five that he again presented himself at his aunt's house. She was at home now, so was Mr. Richards. Would he step into the drawing-room?

Mr. Benskin left his coat and hat in the hall, then nervously entered the room. On the forthcoming interview everything depended.

His aunt was sitting severely upright in an uncomfortable-looking chair near the window, between her and the door a man was standing, and the nervous young man stood gasping, for the man was the portly little man he had spoken to in the betting-ring on the racecourse. He was on the point of blurting out something when the fierce grimaces of the little man stopped him short, and he stood where he was, gazing vacantly at his aunt.

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"Come along in, Paul," said that lady severely. "Don't stand there like a lunatic. This is my husband. He won't eat you—cannibalism is not one of his weaknesses."

Mr. Richards smilingly waved away his wife's remarks.

"His important mission has made him nervous, my dear, but there's no need to be. Come in, young man. I'm pleased to meet you for the first time, and I hope it won't be the last."

Mr. Benskin shook hands with them both, pondering on the degrading influences of the turf.

Tea was brought in, and the portly little man, after staring solemnly into his cup for some time, suddenly turned round to his wife.

"In regard to this little question of opening the drapery shop," he said jocularly, "I think, my dear, we can advance the sum of a couple of hundred pounds. I——"

"But, George, you always ob——"

"Tut, tut, Selina, let the past bury the past. I had not seen the young man then. I have faith in him, great faith in him, my dear. I think if we can come to a mutual understanding as regards security and interest we——"

Satisfactory arrangements were agreed upon.

When his wife had gone into another room to draw a cheque for the amount, Mr. Richards leant forward and hoarsely announced that he was very fond of horse-racing, but since his marriage had found it difficult to attend many meetings. The missionary gathering had given him his opportunity that day. He took great care to point out that silence in regard to what had occurred was for their mutual benefit.

Mr. Paul Theodore Benskin caught the seven o'clock train from Lingwick, which was long after the race crowd had departed. The next morning he banked the three hundred pounds, handed in his resignation and went to see the lady in the ribbon department, and tell her of his good fortune.

The shop was a great success, but Mr Benskin has never found time to patronise another race meeting.

The man was the portly little man he had spoken to in the betting-ring on the race course.

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A Day in the Life of a Wrestler

By Zbysco

Early in June Zbysco and Georges Hackenschmidt, "The Russian Lion," will Wrestle at Olympia. Zbysco has Every Hope of Lowering the Russian's Colours, and the Coming Contest Lends Additional Interest to This Account from his Pen of his Methods of Training and Diet.

Since I have been in England, I confess I have noticed with considerable surprise that, despite the fact that wrestling is now one of the most popular sports in the country, very few people, all the same, have any but the vaguest ideas of the "behind the scenes" life of a wrestling champion, the majority seeming to think that little or no "training" is necessary.

Personally, I carry out my daily routine, which is a most arduous one, with almost machine-like regularity, for experience has taught me that the real secret of health and strength lies, firstly, in discovering an exercise and diet programme which suits one's own particular temperament and constitution, and afterwards in observing every rule and regulation of that programme with never-failing regularity.

Thus, ever since I have taken up wrestling as my profession in life, I have made a rule of rising punctually at eight, when, after taking my tub, I endeavour to satisfy my early-morning hunger with a small roll, washed down by a cup of coffee and milk, in which beverage, by the way, coffee does not figure very largely.

After this modest meal I take a short walk, wet or fine, and then at ten o'clock I commence wrestling practice with my trainer or some friend, and continue hard at it for the best part of an hour, at the end of which time it can be easily understood that there is an exceedingly keen edge to my appetite for breakfast. This meal is the next item on my programme, and it consists, as a rule, of coffee and milk—again chiefly milk—eggs, fish, or some other easily-digested food, rolls and butter and jam, to which repast I do ample justice, and I have no doubt that many a millionaire would give half his millions to possess such a healthy desire for good plain food.

By this time it is almost twelve o'clock. For the next two hours I generally take another course of sharp walking exercise in the London parks, a form of exercise which I sometimes change to running when it is dusk. I find, too, that a mixture of wrestling and pedestrian exercise, combined with careful and judicious living, serves to keep me in perfect health all the year round, so that a day never passes when I do not carry out these items on the programme.

At two o'clock—punctuality, I may say, is one of my strong points—my luncheon—I suppose I ought to say dinner, as I never indulge in late dinner in the evening—is served, and, as I am not a believer in any special diet so long as my food is plain and well cooked, I permit myself plenty of variety for this meal, which, however, generally consists of a substantial steak, slightly underdone, or a cut from the joint, with vegetables, rice, and home-made lemon water.

Alcohol, in any shape or form, except in the smallest quantities, or for medicinal purposes, is, I am firmly convinced, the worst thing in the world a strong man—or, for that matter, a weak man either—can possibly indulge in, and I do not smoke.

But to return to my day. After allowing

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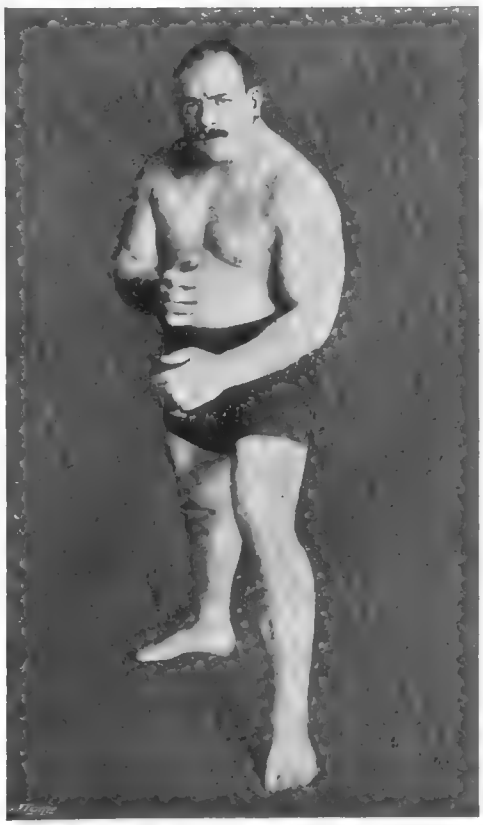
myself half-an-hour's rest to give my digestive organs a chance of recovering from the shock of my hearty midday meal, I again indulge in more wrestling practice, but as most people not immediately concerned with wrestling as a sport probably have but the most hazy idea of the exact form which wrestling exercise takes, I have asked my manager, Mr. C. B. Cochran, to write down for me an account of a typical wrestling practice bout, as when one is engaged in wrestling one is not able to describe matters quite so accurately as a "looker-on," who must, obviously, "see most of the game."

I will give the details of such a bout between myself and my trainer exactly as my manager has written them down: "Zbysco's trainer, as those who have seen him know, is a man of very fine physique, and in excellent condition. The bout between Zbysco and his trainer I am describing for THE ROYAL MAGAZINE lasted for forty minutes without a break. Most of the work was upstanding, the idea being to avoid and break locks, and strengthen the back and loins. For three-quarters of an hour there was not a halt of a second. Close upon 35st. of bone and muscle clashed and swayed from one side of the room to the other in hard and genuine battling. Neither man spared the other a jot until Zbysco managed to get on a deadly hold when his trainer was released in order that the exercise might be varied and continued. The Galician showed his remarkable strength by hoisting his trainer, who weighs nearly 17st., from one side of the room to the other, while the latter displayed marked skill and cleverness in escaping from danger.



Zbysco as he takes the mat—17 stone, and trained to a hair.

"There was a fascination about the thing that made the time fly quickly, and, bare to the skin, the wrestlers got so hot, and the perspiration came so freely, that finally a hold was difficult to obtain. The mat, indeed, looked as though it had been put out in the rain when the bout was declared at an end."

The moment I have finished my wrestling practice I put on a thick, loose dressing-gown and sit down quietly for a few minutes —I am, as can be easily understood, in much the same condition after three-quarters of an hour's wrestling as if I had just come out of a Turkish bath — and allow myself to cool. Then, immediately following a good brisk rub down, I plunge into a cold bath—I much prefer cold to hot water, as the reaction brings the blood to the surface and prevents chill—while after still another energetic "grooming" and a few minutes' massage, I change into ordinary mufti once more, feeling, after my strenuous exercise, as "fit as a fiddle," to use an expression which I have often heard since I have been in England.

Many people, by the by, seem to think that wrestlers are specially trained for their profession from their earliest days. Such, however, is not the case as a rule, and it was not until I was twenty-two that I first decided to take up the great sport of wrestling as a profession. Still, I realised quite early in life all the same that Nature had endowed me with unusual strength. Moreover, when I was a youth a curious incident happened in which my powerful physique proved of signal service.

At the little township of Stryj in Galicia, where I was born, a fire broke out, and the

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local brigade was mustering when one of the horses was found to be disabled. I happened to be watching the firemen getting their engine ready, and, acting on an inspiration, considerably to the astonishment of the crowd around, I offered my services in place of the disabled horse, which were accepted at once, for—I say it with all modesty—I had already established a firm local reputation as a strong man. So, getting in alongside the other horse, I helped to pull the brigade to the scene of the fire.

Zbysco's "big right arm," bent in order to exhibit his muscle.

For some years I wrestled as an amateur, not having any idea that I should be able to compete with the great professional wrestlers, and, as a matter of fact, it was not until I was twenty, and still an amateur, that my first big match came off. This took place in Vienna, but, as luck would have it, the day before the match I had the ill-fortune to dislocate my left shoulder in practice. Still, such great issues were at stake that I could not afford to neglect to meet my opponent, so, rather than "cry off," I took the mat practically a one-armed man.

Fortunately, however, I realised that my sole chance of success lay in defeating my opponent at once, and, therefore, with a courage born of desperation, I rushed forward, grasped my opponent round the waist with the only "working" arm I had left, and, throwing him to the ground, I succeeded afterwards in crushing him with my weight, which, incidentally, I may say is the mere feather of 17st.

That was my first notable victory, and I shall never forget my feelings as long as I live as I entered the ring with one arm completely *hors de combat*. Two years later, I entered the ranks of professionalism, and the proudest moment of my whole career will be some day early in June if, as I sincerely hope will be the case, I succeed in pinning the mighty Hackenschmidt's shoulders to the ground.

"Do I think I shall win?" perhaps you will ask.

My reply is: "I hope so—but the result is in the lap of the gods."

I have already said that I do not allow myself the luxury of late dinner for, truth to tell, experience has taught me that, this meal —although I like it—does not like me. At five o'clock in the evening, therefore, with an appetite of such formidable dimensions that I feel I could go through a menu of at least a dozen courses with the greatest enjoyment, I have, perforce, to try and feel satisfied with a little tea plentifully diluted with milk and a couple of pieces of toast and butter.

The Calician wrestler's mighty arm and back muscles.

I then rest until it is time for my evening's engagements to commence. Ever since I have been a public wrestler I have been

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Although he finds pedestrian exercise an excellent method for keeping fit, Zbysco does not despise cycling as a variation.

prepared to meet all genuine challengers who wish to try a bout with me.

In the following account of my recent match with Kara Suliman, the Turk, which I have taken from a sporting paper, I will explain the meaning of every "technical term" therein.

"Suliman managed to force his opponent to the ground, after trying to secure a 'waist and neck ground-hold' (which, in everyday language, means that he suddenly slipped his right arm underneath mine, and, pressing my head down with his left, lifted me up from the waist downwards). The next incident was a very hard smack on the back by Suliman, which roused Zbysco to such a tune that, after slipping out of a body-hold (or, in other words, breaking away from my opponent's grip round my body) he tried to put on an arm-throw, which he did by throwing his left arm round Suliman's waist from behind, when, by gripping his right hand, he was in the position to hoist his opponent from behind. The Turk, however, broke away.

"Finally, Zbysco saw an opportunity, and, spinning himself over Suliman's body, before the latter realised his position he had got both hands under him. The Turk struggled to get out, but the position was hopeless, and gradually he was levered down on to both shoulders, and the Galician won the match with a fine pin-fall."

By the way, I must explain that in wrestling there are two sorts of fall, a "pin-fall" and a "rolling-fall." The former is secured when a wrestler's shoulders both touch the ground, and are held there fairly and squarely, but in the case of a "rolling" fall it is merely necessary for both shoulders to touch the ground without actually being held there.

For obvious reasons, I cannot go into precise figures with regard to the yearly income of a wrestling champion, but I may say that the position of a successful wrestler has decided financial compensations, while if, in all his matches, as I invariably do, he posts his own stake money, his earnings are largely increased if he is fortunate enough to be able to pull off a number of big matches.

As suppleness and quickness are essentials to success, few wrestlers are seen at their best after the age of thirty-five or thereabouts. However, a successful wrestler by that time should have earned sufficient money to keep himself in comfort.

Like Hackenschmidt, I have a partiality for chocolates. I also have a mascot, a small green lizard, which is never far away from me.

The photographs in this article are by the Illustrations Bureau.

Setting out for the morning walk.

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FLOWER MUMMIES

A Description of a Simple Method of Preserving the Beauty of Flowers.

By JOHN JONES.

A humble-bee on a piece of carefully-dried red clover. The insect has been arranged in a delightfully characteristic pose.

EVERYBODY who loves flowers must have longed for some simple method of preserving their beauty.

The old-fashioned way was to pick your flower and press it flatter than a pancake. When you took it from the press, gone was the beauty of form and gone often the beauty of colour. You were possessed of a mummy as dried and as lacking in beauty as only a mummy can be. Yet a mummy can be beautiful, and a flower mummy can be almost as beautiful as the living flower.

Many are the drawbacks of the pressing system. One requires special apparatus, and it is not easy to get a satisfactory result.

Then the pressing often destroys just those peculiarities of structure and habit that one chiefly wishes to preserve. Above all is the drawback that a pressed flower bears about as much resemblance to a living flower as an oak table to an oak-tree.

Many are the advantages of a system which allows the flowers to keep their natural form. Delicate tubes still may be seen wherein the tongue of bee or moth sucked for nectar. Delicate organs—marvellous devices for insuring the fertilisation of the flower—still may be pointed out. The model, duly labelled, is an exact model, and serves better than an engraving or a painting for purposes of comparison, when one is in doubt as to the species of a wild flower. Then, in museums, the flowers preserved in their natural form have invaluable uses. Insects that feed upon them, for instance, may be mounted upon them, and an interesting object-lesson results, which pressed flowers would not allow. In the general work of Nature-study, now going on in the schools and homes throughout the country, the preserved flowers have a wide scope of usefulness.

There are, of course, many scientific ways of preserving flowers, but most of them are beyond the reach of amateurs, and details of some of the newest ones are kept a jealous secret. Nothing could be simpler, and few systems could be better, than the following:

Firstly, you must pick your flower, as in making hare soup you must first catch your hare. It will not be necessary to pull up the flower by the roots, as so many collectors do; but a few leaves should always be taken with the flower, not only for effect's sake, but because a flower without a leaf is of small use to the student of botany, the characteristics of leaves being just as important in identifying specimens as those of flowers. Secondly, you must take a flower-pot of a size which will easily hold the specimen to be preserved.

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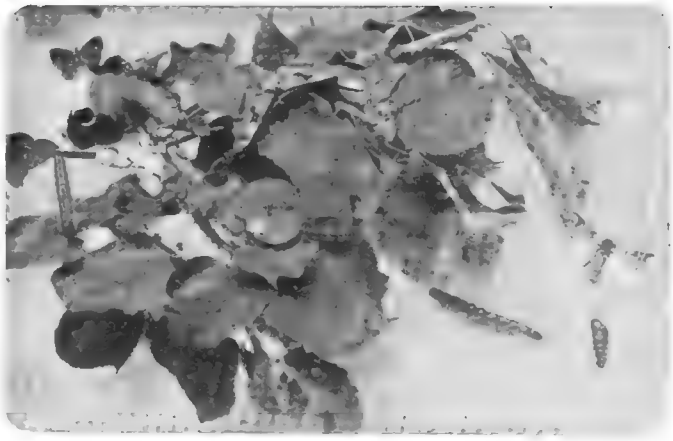
Thirdly, you must put your flower in the pot, and bury it in clean, dry sand, in such a gradual way, and with such care, that not a leaf or a petal is pushed out of its natural and proper place.

And that is practically all. In ten or twelve days or so, a plant buried in this fashion will be mummified. Dry through and through, it will now endure. Care, however, must be taken in handling specimens, for they are somewhat brittle.

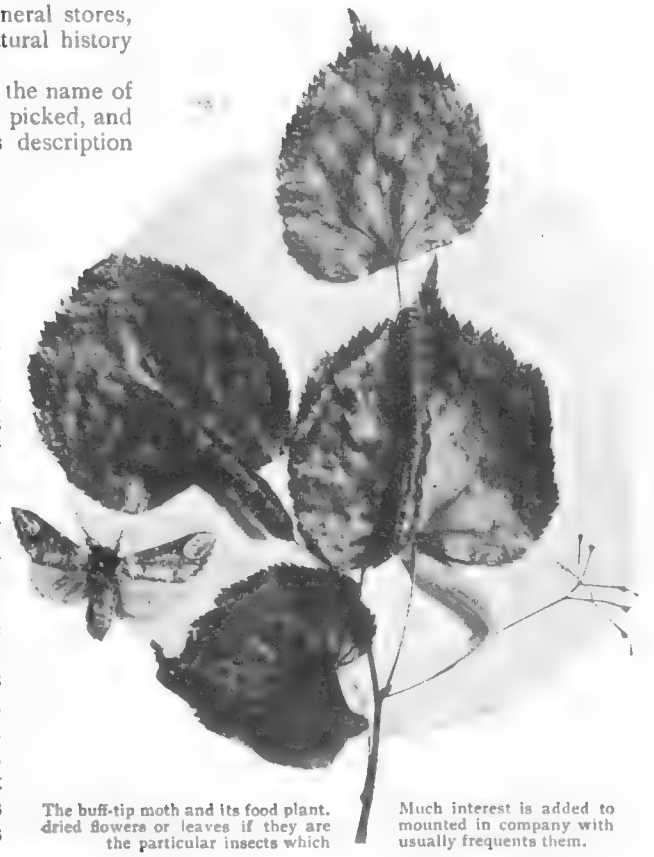


Caterpillars and moths mounted with dry leaves; a specimen that required particularly delicate handling, owing to the brittleness of the leaves.

The sand should be removed very gingerly. Some of it may be poured gently away—the last grains must be picked from the flower with a small camel-hair brush. All that remains to be done is to fasten the specimen to a card by a few stitches, to label it, and to drop it into a glass-topped box of suitable size. Such boxes can be obtained for very small sums at most general stores, and at any shop dealing with natural history objects.

The label should tell at least the name of the plant, the date when it was picked, and the locality where found. This description may be added to at any length. It might be interesting to record, for example, the earliest and the latest date at which you have found the specimen in question in flower; while the label becomes of real value if it describes any peculiarities of the flower—as that certain lines on a petal serve as a honey-guide to visiting insects, or that certain florets are barren florets, and serve only the purpose of advertisement. Remember, every individual flower you may pick is worthy of a life's study, and that if you were to study it for a life-time, you would not have time enough to get to the bottom of the mystery of its existence.

There are many refinements of this art of preserving flowers. The best results are obtained when the drying process is rapid. The expert puts the flower-pot with the sand in the oven of his chemical laboratory; or he puts the plant in a chamber, whence he withdraws the air with an air-pump, and then uses strong sulphuric acid to absorb the moisture given off by the plant as it dries. Another system is to dry the plants in a mixture of



The buff-tip moth and its food plant. Much interest is added to dried flowers or leaves if they are mounted in company with the particular insects which usually frequents them.

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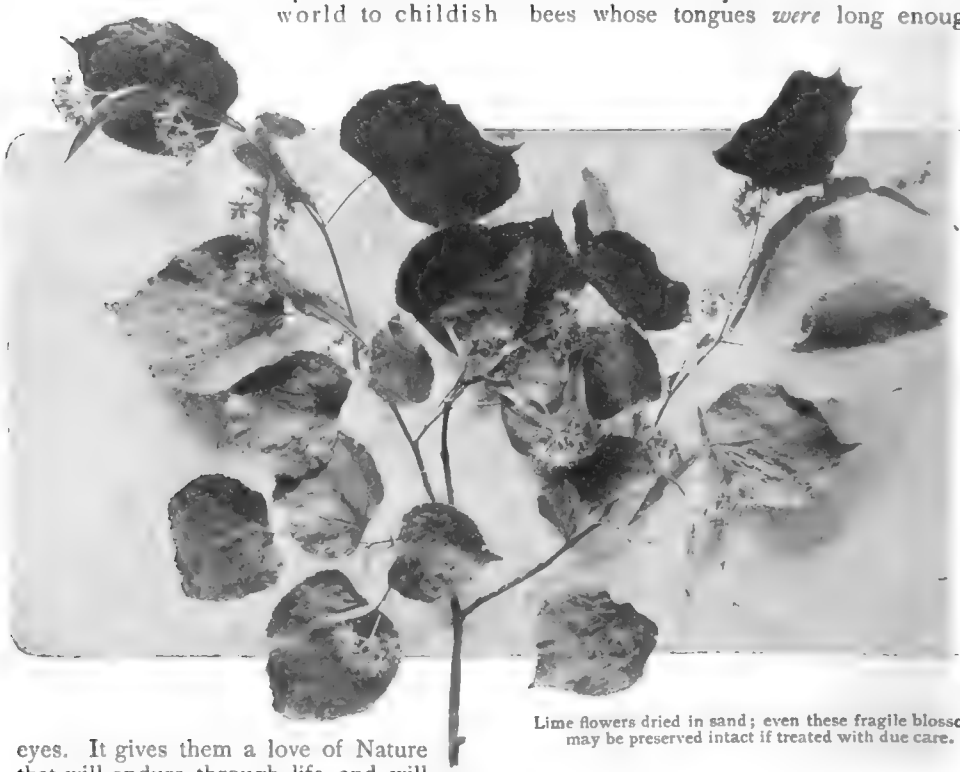
plaster of Paris and slack lime—three parts of the former to one of the latter. But the simple sand system described is almost as good.

Most children are born with a passion for collecting — and it is a wise parent who encourages it upon the right lines. Stamp-collecting may be a useful passion in that it teaches geography; but its usefulness pales into insignificance in comparison with that of flower-collecting. Not the ruthless plucking and throwing away of specimens; but the careful picking only of those required for study, and their careful preservation. This opens out a new world to childish eyes. It gives them a love of Nature that will endure through life, and will prove a solace after all other loves have failed. It inspires a keenness for new specimens, which insures that the collector's ardour can never flag. And the collecting and preserving of wild flowers is the broadest and surest of all channels by which a child may be borne to a knowledge of the wonder and mystery of life.



Lime flowers dried in sand; even these fragile blossoms may be preserved intact if treated with due care.

As an example of what a single specimen may teach, take the pretty illustration of the humble-bee visiting the clover head.

Most people, if asked to say how clover is fertilised, would reply—by bees: meaning, by the common honey bees. But the child who had seen the preserved flower with the humble-bee thereon would know better; and would have an interesting little story to tell in proof of the correctness of his knowledge.

Some time ago the farmers of New Zealand were in despair because their clover crops failed to produce seed. The reason was found to be that the native bees were not provided with tongues long enough for reaching the flowers' honey. So they did not visit the flowers, and therefore no fertilising pollen was carried by the bees from flower to flower, and no seed was set.

But the remedy was obvious. Humble-bees whose tongues *were* long enough to reach the honey were collected in this country and dispatched to New Zealand. The experiment was successful; the bees increased and multiplied, and the difficulty of obtaining seed from clover no longer exists.

Many of the naturalists' field-clubs that are springing up all over the country have museums attached to them in which collections of flowers and insects are exhibited. These museums are usually dry-as-dust affairs; but when the flowers are preserved in their natural state, and are accompanied by

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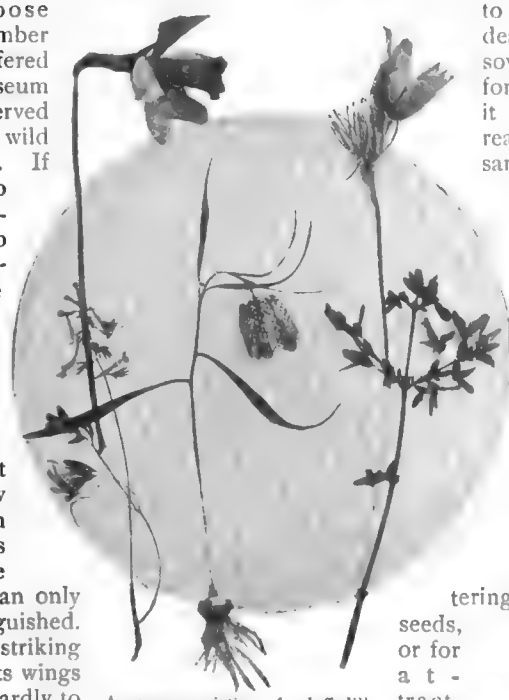
A sprig of sallow preserved by drying.

specimens of the insects that haunt them, their interest is undeniable, and must appeal to all. Field-club secretaries would do well to bear the point in mind. A preserved butterfly or moth looks much better resting on a leaf, as in nature, than when set up on cork. Specimens of the insect may be shown in all the stages of its existence, from the egg to the perfect insect; and many interesting points may be brought out in this way.

Suppose a member has offered the museum a preserved head of wild parsley. If two orange-tip butterflies are set up on the flower-head, one with wings folded the other with wings expanded, as at the moment of alighting, the point is at once brought out how wonderfully the green and white undersides of the wings match the flowers, so that they can only with difficulty be distinguished. An orange-tip is a striking object enough when its wings are expanded, but is hardly to be seen when it roosts, as it loves to do, amid the parsley. Endless cases of protective colouration may be illustrated with the help of flowers preserved on the right system.

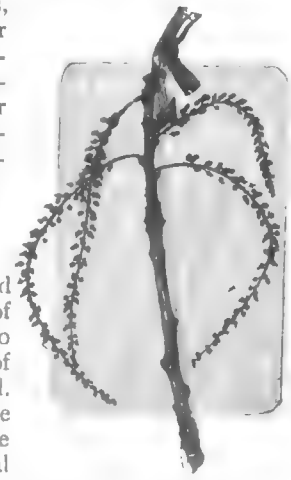


A group consisting of a daffodill, fritillary, and other flowers successfully dried by the Botanical Association.

It would be very interesting to have a preserved specimen of the flowers of the Yucca plant of South America, with the moth that fertilises them in place. The moth collects from several flowers a ball of the fertilising pollen, which she kneads with her tentacles into a firm pellet, and carries to a different flower, wherein she deposits her eggs. She then presses the ball of pollen into the flower's stigma, and the ovules of the flower are thus fertilised; some to be eaten by the larvæ of the moth, others to develop into seeds, and reproduce the plant.

To mount insects on artificial leaves or flowers is to give them at once an air of unreality. The imitation leaves and flowers used in the big museums as a setting to insects cost a good deal of money—half-a-sovereign or a sovereign for a small spray. So it saves money to dry real specimens for the same purpose, besides adding to the effect.

We may look forward to the time when heaps of carelessly preserved plants shall no longer be exhibited in local museums, but when each plant shall be carefully dried and set up in the way suggested, so that its peculiar habits—its means of climbing, its devices for scattering its seeds, or for attracting or repelling insect visitors—shall be shown off with the most life-like effect.



A small dried poplar branch.

We are indebted for the first four of our illustrations to the courtesy of Miss Kate Hall. The others were kindly lent by the British Botanical Association.

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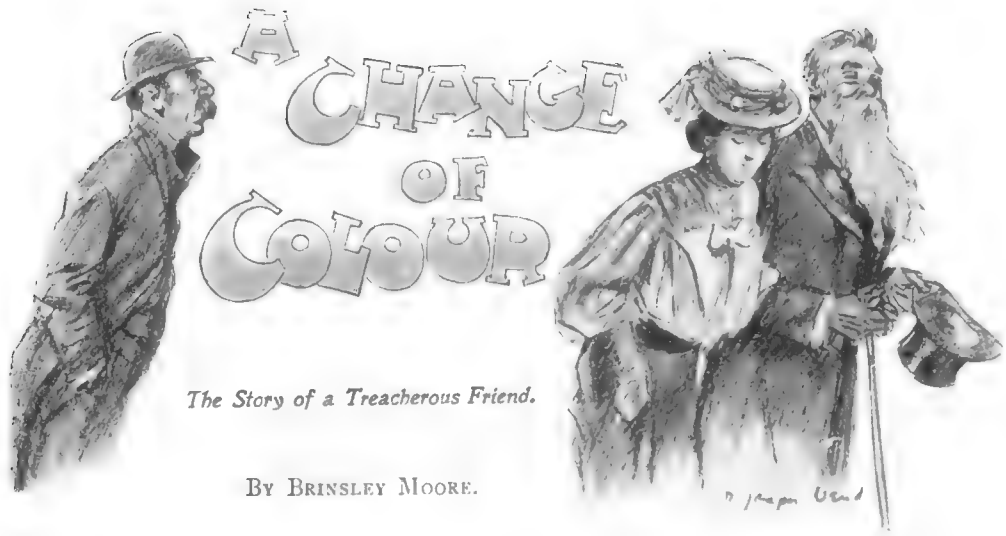

The Story of a Treacherous Friend.

By Brinsley Moore.

It began—said the landlord, as he filled his pipe slowly and thoughtfully—it began like this. We was sittin' 'ere in this very parlour of the "Blue Pig" one night—a good comp'ny of old and respected residents. There wasn't much in the papers that day, and the conversation seemed to slack off a bit, and things got dull; so, by-and-by, I told them a bit of noos as 'ad come to me, which I thought 'ud liven 'em up.

"'Ave you heard," I says, "as Ben Thompson 'as died in Australey and left his widder very well off? She's comin' back 'ome in June."

Now, you know, if I could 'ave told them that twenty years before, it would 'ave caused them any amount of excitement. Amelia Wilkins was, as you may say, the belle of the place, and she left a many broken 'earts behind her when she ran off and married Ben Thompson. But, lor' bless you, twenty years makes a lot of difference to broken 'earts, especially if you're young when it 'appens; most of them as I was tellin' 'ad got over it pretty well considerin', and 'ad married other women and settled down.

There *were* one or two as I thought seemed a bit aggravated when I told them 'ow well off Amelia was left; indeed, I remember it was that very night as James Exley went 'ome and gave his wife a black eye, and Mrs. Jeffs agen the post-office was found in 'ighstericks because her 'usband, as was usually a mild and inoffensive sort of man, called her a 'indrance and a drag, and said he wished as he 'ad never come across her.

But the only two that was really interested, bein' still bach'lers, was Seth Biddlecombe at the mill and Joe Watson as worked at the chemicals factory down in Milltown. Bein' free, you see, it looked as though it might be a good openin' for one of them.

Seth Biddlecombe, as was always a straightforward, simple-minded man, made no secret about his intentions. He called in to see me next day, and told me all his plans.

"Amelia treated me bad," he says; "but I don't bear no malice. I've bin doin' pretty well all these years, and I can offer her a comfortable 'ome now, when she comes back."

He'd 'ardly got clear of the 'ouse when in comes Joe Watson. He wanted to know if I could tell him Amelia Thompson's address, as he wished to write as a old friend to congratulate her on her good fortune. He looked so disapp'inted when I couldn't tell him the address, owin' to her bein' already on the 'igh seas, that I felt as I ought to give him a bit of advice.

"Look 'ere, Joe," I says, quite plain, "I sees wot's your little game; but you take my advice, and drop it. Amelia Thompson ain't for you. You 'aven't a ghost of a chance agenst a man like Seth Biddlecombe."

"Seth Biddlecombe isn't everybody's ch'ice," says he, very bitter.

"He's a good, substantial man," I says, "with a nice little 'ome, and a comfortable income."

"And red 'air," says Joe. "She always used to make fun of his 'air as a lad; and it's a deal redder now than it was then—to say nothink of the big beard as he's growed."

"Ah, my lad," I says, "she was young

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then and friv'lous; she'll look at things more sensible now. And you may take it from me, as a observer of wot goes on round about him, that I've never yet found a woman of forty as would let a man's colour stand in the way if 'ouse and income and other things was to her mind."

Then I went on to tell him of sev'ral cases of red-'eaded men as I 'ave known to marry very satisfact'ry in spite of the drawback. But he always was a obstinate fellow, was Joe Watson, and he wouldn't listen to sound advice. He went off quite put out because I tried to lead him right.

'Owever, I guess as he must 'ave bin thinkin' over wot I'd said, for that very night he goes round to Seth Biddlecombe's to see for himself 'ow things was shapin'. I've told you already wot a simple-minded man Seth was; and he opened out his ideas very freely, and told Joe all his 'opes.

"She lands at Southampton on the 19th of June," he says. "I shall be down there ready when she arrives, so as to get the start of everybody else; and it won't be my fault if she don't come 'ere as Mrs. Biddlecombe."

Joe was a bit downcast at this. Bein' himself a man on a weekly wage, you see, he couldn't get off like that, and he couldn't 'elp feelin' wot an unfair advantage Seth would 'ave by bein' on the spot and 'avin' Mrs. Thompson all to himself. 'Owever, he was artful enough to 'ide his feelin's, and listen while Biddlecombe laid out his plans.

Then he got up to go.

"Well," he says, 'oldin' out his 'and like a troo friend, "you've spoke to me very free and open, and I wish you luck. But I'm sorry about your 'ead."

"Why?" says Seth, puttin' up his 'and to feel. "Wot's wrong with it?"

"It's the colour as I'm thinkin' of," says Joe, lookin' sorry for him. "Wimmin is so prejoodiced agen red 'air. And yours *is* red, you know—an' no mistake about it. A 'ead and whiskers such as you've got comes as rather a shock to anyone as sees it suddin, without bein' warned. . . . If I was you," says Joe, "I should give up that idee of meetin' her at Southampton. You let her come and settle down quiet; give her time to talk to other people as can describe the sort of man you look like before she sees you —it'll lessen the shock."

Then Joe went 'ome, feelin' as he 'ad done a good evenin's work. But he'd done a lot more than he thought or intended; for next night, when he got back from the fact'ry, he found old Biddlecombe waitin' for him at his lodgin's.

"I've bin thinkin' over wot you said last night," said Biddlecombe, lookin' very worrited. "It never struck me afore as it might be viewed as an objection. . . . Now, as a friend in the chemicals—'ow do you think it 'ud be to dye it?"

But Joe didn't like that idee at all. He said as dyes was messy things, and came off on the pillers; if you once began with them, you 'ad to keep it up reg'lar—and people could always see that it was only dye.

He used all the argiments as he could bring up agenst it, and said as it was a deception as no Christian man ought to think of. He even went so far as to invent a friend wot 'ad tried to dye his 'air, and within a month it all rotted off and left him as bald as a billiard ball. But, say wot he would, he could see as old Biddlecombe stuck to his idee, and meant to do it.

Then he began to work out a noo plan.

"I may tell you in confidence," he said, "that there is a chemical invention for alterin' the colour of people's 'air—none of your messy dyes, but a reel change wot goes to the root of the matter. It's a friend of mine in Linkinshire," he says, "as is working it, and it will come out about next Christmas—the greatest discov'ry of the age, the Infallible and Universal Pigmentary Hair Wash. You'd better wait, and get some of that."

"But she's comin' the 19th of next month," said Biddlecombe, still bent on meetin' Mrs. Thompson at Southampton.

"Well," says Joe, "all you 'ave to do is to make some excuse—'ide away somewhere for the next few months till this invention comes out. Then in less than a week you can turn up agen with the thing properly done, and no longer any cause to feel ashamed of your pers'nal appearance. That's wot *I* should advise—go and 'ide."

But Biddlecome wouldn't hear of that. Nothink as Joe could say would alter his determination of meetin' the vessel and makin' his proposal to Amelia Thompson on the very day as she landed. He was so strong on this point that Joe 'ad to think very 'ard afore he could find any way of stoppin' it.

"Well, look 'ere," he said at last, "I'll tell you wot I'll do. It's a big thing to ask, and I wouldn't do it for nobody else. But you're in such a 'ole," he says, "that I can't 'elp feelin' sorry for you. I'll write and ask my friend if, as a special favour, he'll let you 'ave a bottle of the invention privately, without waitin' for it to be put on the market. I

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don't say, mind you, as he will—these inventors are partic'ler fellers, and don't like lettin' things out till it's all settled and secured. But he *may* do it for me. Any'ow, it's worth tryin'."

So it was arranged for Joe to write to his friend—a man with a name as Biddlecombe said sounded like Perry Oxhide—and report wot he replied.

For several days, though Seth called every night to inquire, there wasn't no answer. But after about a week Joe reported as a letter 'ad come. Perry Oxhide said that he would be very glad to oblige a friend as he respected as much as Joe, but there was certain difficulties in the way.

The remedy was a secret process, and until it was properly patented and stamped, it wouldn't be legal to let anybody 'ave it unless he signed a paper sayin' as he took it entirely on his own risk, and that he would forfeit £500 if at any time he ever revealed to anybody 'ow it 'ad bin done.

"I don't see much difficulty there," says Biddlecombe. "Give me the paper, and I'll sign it."

"It's a big sum," says Joe, as if he was very unwillin'. "£500 if ever you tell anybody wot you've bin usin' or where you got it."

"But I shan't want to tell anybody," says Biddlecombe. "It isn't the sort of thing as I am likely to talk about—why should I?"

"Well," says Joe, when he'd made certain that he was really bent on it, "it isn't a sum as I should like to promise myself, unless I felt quite sure as I should be able to 'old my tongue. If I was you I should wait till you can buy it in the open market like other folks, without all these restrictions. But if, agen my advice, you're determined to do it—well, of course, I won't stand in your way. On'y it must be clear as you do it of your own free will, and agenst *my* judgment and counsel."

So old Biddlecombe signed the agreement, and Joe said as he would send it off at once.

It was the 1st of June when the parcel arrived. Old Biddlecombe was a bit disappointed to find as it was such a little bottle, and he seemed as if he'd 'ave liked it better if it 'ad bin coloured instead of a clear white liquid as looked as 'armless as plain water. But Joe said as it was very strong stuff, though it looked so innercent, and he must be very careful 'ow he used it, and foller the directions as Perry Oxhide 'ad written out.

Well, Seth Biddlecombe took the bottle 'ome, and went to bed early, bein' anxious to begin on the invention at once. He gave his 'ead and whiskers a good dressing, and as soon as it was dry he got into bed. Durin' the first part of the night, I gather as he didn't sleep much, owin' to anxiousness—he kep' turnin' out and strikin' matches to see 'ow he was gettin' on.

There wasn't any signs of change up to two o'clock, and he began to think as Mr. Perry Oxhide was an impostor. Then he must 'ave fallen asleep; for the next thing he remembered was broad daylight, and the sun a-streamin' into his room. He jumped out of bed and 'urried to the lookin'-glass. There he saw a sight as was well-calkilated to upset a man. The change 'ad come, but not at all wot you might 'ave expected or desired. All his 'air and that big beard as came down to his waist 'ad turned *bright green!*

* * * * *

"No," says Joe, when they'd fetched him round in a 'urry—"no; I shouldn't send for a doctor if I was you. He might begin by askin' questions as would be awkward for you to answer, bein' bound under such a big penalty not to tell. Perry Oxhide's a good sort, and you can't find a tenderer friend in private life; but when you come to bizness, he's a tartar, that's wot he is. And he'll come down on you at once for that £500 the very moment as he 'ears that you're lettin' out about his invention. I am sorry," says Joe, in a feelin' way, his voice chokin' with emotion every time as he looked at old Biddlecombe and saw 'ow unhappy he was—"I am sorry as it 'as took this form, which is a colour as I never 'ave bin partial to myself. But I daresay as it will darken as you go on, and very likely change to somethink else. Wot you've got to do is to persevere."

But Biddlecombe raved and shouted that he would never touch the stuff agen, and demanded that Perry Oxhide should be fetched at once to undo the mischief as he 'ad caused. He talked so strong about callin' in the pleece and 'avin' the case investigated, that to pacify him Joe had to promise that he would write off at once to Perry Oxhide and ask him what ought to be done.

Two days after, Joe came round with quite a 'opeful face.

"Oh," says he, "it's all right. Perry says as in the early stages you never quite know wot to expect. With some it goes red, and with others blue—he's even known it to turn yaller at first with delicut people. Yours is the first as 'as gone green, but he says you needn't worry about that; it's probably bringin' out somethink in your constitootion

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as you didn't know of. All you've got to do is to persevere till you get the shade as you desire."

So old Biddlecome started afresh. The time bein' short, and 'avin' lost two days by the delay, he even did more than the directions said, and dabbled himself over with the invention twice a day instead of once. He kep' in his bedroom all the time, and wouldn't see nobody; even the 'ouse-keeper had to leave his meals outside the door, so as he could take them in after she'd gone.

Joe used to go in every night and encourage him to persevere. But the only result was that at the end of the week pore old Seth was a stronger green than ever—and the bottle was empty.

"We must get a further supply," says Joe, quite cheerful. "Don't you worrit yourself—I'll write off at once."

Then it was that an 'itch seemed to occur in the arrangements. Days passed without any reply. It even went on into the week as Amelia Thompson was expected to land. Joe said as he couldn't understand it, and Biddlecombe was gettin' desperit with worrit and despair. Then, the very evenin' afore Seth ought to 'ave started for Southampton, Joe comes round with a melerncholy face and a black band on his 'at.

"I've 'ad sad noos to-day," he says, puttin' his pocket-'andkercher up to his face.

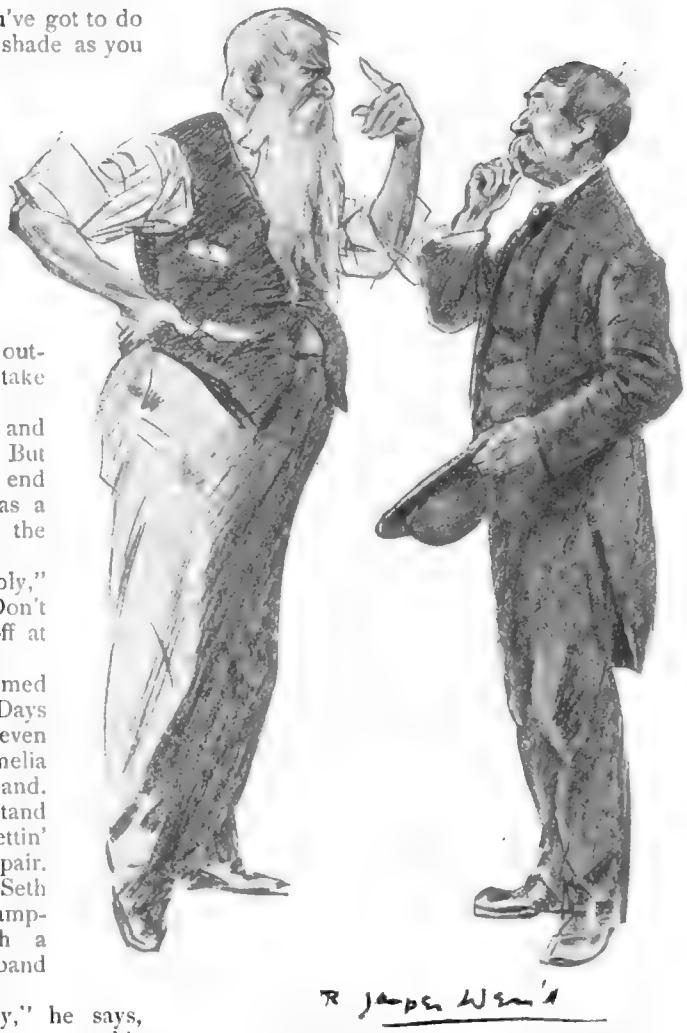
"Wot is it?" arsts Biddlecombe.

"It's pore Perry Oxhide," says Joe. "It's a loss as science won't get over in a 'urry," he says. "He was very anxious, you see, to make you up a bottle extry strong, as the time 'ad got so short. And in experimentin' yesterday with that view," says Joe, "the pore feller overdid it, and blowed up hisself and all his chemicals as well!"

* * * * *

It took old Biddlecombe a consid'rable time to get his troo colour back agen—indeed, he'd bin married nigh on two years before he was altogether wot you might call quite his old self.

Married? Oh, yes; he got married after all—that was the curious part of it. Directly Amelia Thompson saw him, she seemed to take to him at once.



"I am sorry," says Joe in a feelin' way, his voice chokin' with emotion.

Biddlecombe was still shut up in his room when she called, bein' afraid to show himself in the street; and he explained to her as far as he dare—rememb'rin' the £500—that somethink 'ad 'appened to his 'air as he 'oped would pass off with time. But Amelia didn't seem to pay no attention; and when he repeated it, she only laughed and arst if he was fishin' for compliments

"I was afraid," she says, "from what I could reckerlect of you when young, as it would be *red*—which is a colour as I can't a-bear. I am glad to see as it 'as darkened with age."

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It was young Dr. Clayton as first solved the myst'ry.

She even went so far as to say that it was now just the shade as she always did admire in a man.

Joe Watson, as 'ad taken her in to show her wot a sight Seth 'ad made of hisself, could 'ardly believe his ears, and thought she was 'avin' a joke. But, as he soon found out, it was no joke at all. Next mornin' Mrs. Thompson went back to London, and a week later Seth Biddlecombe followed her. When they came back shortly after, Ben Thompson's widder was Mrs. Biddlecombe.

And Joe wasn't the only one as was surprised at the turn things 'ad taken. We was all puzzled. For though, as I've told you, Seth Biddlecombe was a well-to-do feller with a comfortable 'ome, yet—all said and done—you'd 'ave thought a woman would have drawed the line at green 'air.

Some said she'd 'ad him for his money, bein' doubtful if she'd reely got any of her own. Some thought as she was bound down to do it under the will of her late 'usband. But the general opinion was that she must 'ave gone out of her mind—though I will say as there was no signs in other respects of that.

It was young Dr. Clayton as first solved the myst'ry. He was nooly come into these parts—a clever young chap, as got very pop'lar at once by findin' out that we was sufferin' from a lot of noo diseases as the old doctor didn't seem even to know the names of. A reg'lar up-to-date sort o' man was Clayton, as went in for all the latest idees; and he was very much int'rested in wot people told him about Seth's green 'air. Before he'd bin here a week, he called in at their 'ouse to try and find out wot it reely was.

Seth himself wasn't at 'ome. But Mrs. Biddlecombe was sittin' there, a-mendin' her 'usband's red socks with blue wool. The doctor was a good deal struck with them socks, and arst her a lot of questions about bits of various coloured stuffs in her work-basket. Then he looked into her eyes with microscopes and other things as he carried in his bag. Fin'ly, he came away lookin' very pleased.

He was doctorin' Joe Watson for the lumbager at the time and told him about it.

"A most interestin' case," he said; "a typical instance of pernounced Daltonism."

"Is it ketchin'?" arst Joe.

"Ketchin'?" says the doctor. "Oh, dear me, no. It's wot we call colour-blindness, you know—seein' things different 'u's from wot they reely are. For instance, wot you and me 'ud call *green* would 'seem to her to be *a rich brown*."

"Oh," says Joe, as he looked at the fire and began to think things over.

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Photo The beach at Skegness. *Robinson.*

262 Miles for 3s.

The Cheapest Railway Day-Excursion in the World — From London to Skegness and Back. How 100,000 Tourists Have Made This Trip Recently for the Sake of 5½ Hours at the Sea, at the Charge of Only 3s. a Head, as Many as 4,800 People Going in One Day.

Once upon a time somebody told me that, if one were feeling out of sorts in London, the best of all remedies was to make a day trip to the breezy, bracing sea-coast town of Skegness in Lincolnshire. The hours spent at Skegness, I was told, would make a new man of one, and the hours spent in the train would be full of interest and enjoyment.

On a day in April, 1908, I felt out of sorts. I remembered what I had been told, I went to Skegness. It was pouring with rain when I left London by the 7.15 a.m., but an excellent breakfast on the train put me in the best of tempers. I made up my mind to enjoy the journey to the full. The train glided like a boat on ice, and like an ice-boat went with the speed of the wind. We shook London off in a quarter of an hour, and I saw primroses in the Hadley Woods. In a few minutes, as it seemed, we arrived at Boston, the birthplace, as it were, of the American nation, for thence sailed the *Mayflower* in the year 1620, the Puritan Pilgrim Fathers on board. Boston, U.S.A., I vowed, can show nothing to compare in beauty with the church of St. Botolph in Boston, Lincs. We crossed the vast flat plains of Lincolnshire, and so came to Skegness just before noon.

And here the sun was shining from a cloudless sky. It always does shine at Skegness, I was told, and last year the place held the East Coast sunshine record. There were not many people about on the front. An illimitable waste of blue water rippled before me; an illimitable stretch of hard, flat sand extended north and south, and behind were the long lines of the sandhills, and behind them stretched away illimitably the flattest, richest grazing land in England. I hoped that everybody was not on the golf-course, for of course I had brought my clubs, and was prepared with my green fee.

A mile from the station I found the course, a really fine sporting 18-hole course, parallel with the sea, and lying among the sand-dunes, with natural hazards and splendid turf. A kind of hog's back runs from one end of the links to the other, and I found that they called for every possible class of shot, and that a man must use his brains as much as his hands.

So the afternoon passed all too swiftly. The air of Skegness proved a most bracing tonic; and long before the time came to go back to London I felt like a giant refreshed.

In London, the first man I met was he who had advised me to go to Skegness. When I told him that I had thoroughly enjoyed myself, but had not found many people there, or much going on, he surprised me by saying:

"You are a madman. Who but a madman would go to Skegness in April and expect to find anyone there and anything doing—unless it were, indeed, Eastertime? You would have found Skegness as gay and happy a place as any seaside resort in England had you made a day-excursion in the season. You should have gone on Whit Monday or Tuesday, on

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"Skegness is *so* Bracing." One of the clever posters employed by the Great Northern Railway to advertise Skegness.

the first Monday or Tuesday in August, or on any Sunday during May and June, or on Thursdays and Sundays during July, August, and September—for these are the days when the excursion trains run. And now see what a madman you have been."

Here the expert on Skegness paused dramatically, and began counting up my madnesses.

"You went off at 7.15 in the morning, whereas, if you had waited for the proper excursion train, you might have left London at the comfortable hour of 11.30. You went on a stopping train, whereas the excursion trains are non-stops, and run you up to Skegness in three hours. How extremely ill-advised you were, my dear fellow! Had you gone by the excursion train your railway fare there and back for the 262 miles would have cost you 3*s*."

"What?" I cried in astonishment. "Do you mean to tell me that if I had waited for a Bank Holiday, or a Sunday in May or June, or any Sunday or Thursday from July to September I might have gone there and back for 3*s*.?"

"Yes," said the Skegness expert, "and, moreover, you would have found Skegness a very lively place. You would have seen hundreds of happy children playing on the sands, you could have played cricket on the sands yourself, sailed on the sea, bathed, ridden donkeys, made love to pretty girls in the sheltered spots of the sand-hills——"

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"Happy as a Sandboy." Another excellent poster.

It was at this point that I fled.

* * * * *

It is a solemn, sober fact that in the summer season you may travel the 262 miles from King's Cross to Skegness and back for 3s.

You may start at 11.30 in the morning, arrive at 2.30, spend five and a half hours by the sea, leave at 8 in the evening, and arrive back in London at 11 at night.

100,000 people found this out before the date when I made my celebrated trip to Skegness in April. Since the Great Northern Railway inaugurated these wonderful excursions, 100,000 Londoners have spent long and happy afternoons by the Skegness sea; while they say that three-quarters of the population of Nottingham and the Midlands goes to Skegness for the holidays.

On the days of the excursions an official stands on the platform at King's Cross, holding a magic wand in his hands. The excursion train fills up, some 800 people taking their places. The train starts and departs, leaving five times as many people on the platform as have departed. The official waves his wand, and a second train, technically a second part of the first train, backs down the platform. Another load of 800 people is dispatched. Again the official waves his wand, again another part of the train appears on the scene; and this process has been known to

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go on until six trains have followed one another on non-stop runs to Skegness, bearing away as many as 4800 Londoners.

Search the whole world of railway enterprise, and you will find nothing more wonderful than this.

To the summer excursionist, Skegness should be a Paradise. The sands are the chief marvel of the place: firm, clean, broad, and of endless length, without pebbles, without swamps, but covered in places by shells. A thousand cricketers could play at the same time without inconvenience. Here donkeys trot throughout the season, and horsemen gallop, and children dig castles or play in perfect security—so shallow is the depth of the water—upon the edge of the North Sea. Better than all is the health-giving, invigorating air.

Skegness, by the way, dates back to a great age. The Danes settled here in the ninth century, and the place is mentioned in a charter of 1199. But the old town was destroyed by the inroads of the sea.

The modern Skegness, called into being by the enterprise of the Earl of Scarbrough, is anything but "a poor new thing." It is a bright and pretty little town, with pleasant open spaces and tree-bordered streets. Attractions are manifold. There is the pier, for instance; and from the dome of the concert-room one may look out for sixteen miles across the Wash to the Norfolk Coast, and landwards over a vast plain with many a tall church tower to those hills or wolds of which Tennyson sang, and among which he was born.

Somersby, Tennyson's birthplace, is well worth a visit, and not only for its hallowed associations, for the country thereabouts is not of the flat, billiard-table quality of the rest of Lincolnshire, but varied with hills and dales, vale and woodland:

> The silent woody places
> By the home that gave me birth.

Tennyson's country teems with romantic associations; it was to a Louth bookseller that he sold his first printable manuscript, for example, and it was in celebration of the occasion that he took his brother Charles for an outing to Mablethorpe.

At Mablethorpe, some fourteen or fifteen miles north of Skegness, "Tennyson's Cottage" is to be seen, where, as a boy, he spent his school holidays. It is a primitive little village to this day, without pier or promenade, but with the same glorious sands as at Skegness, and the same glorious air. As much may be said of Sutton, another seaside village two or three miles nearer Skegness, where also a cyclist may ride for miles north or south along the fine, firm, velvet sands, where children may reap harvests of seashells and sea-weeds, and where the verdure-clad sand-hills form the most enticing nooks for book and other lovers. Much of Sutton has been devoured by the sea, but enough remains to attract visitors from far and near.

But Skegness has more attractions for the holiday-maker than Sutton and Mablethorpe together, with her big pleasure gardens, seawater baths; a cricket ground that might rival Lord's, tennis-courts, golf-links, divers hotels, boarding-houses, and churches, a Diamond Jubilee clock tower, a spacious parade a mile long, with tempting shelters for the love-lost, steamboat excursions, libraries, a visitors' list — endless attractions, and cheap enough at 3*s.* for five and a half hours.

Photo A happy little group snapshotted on the sands. *Wright.*

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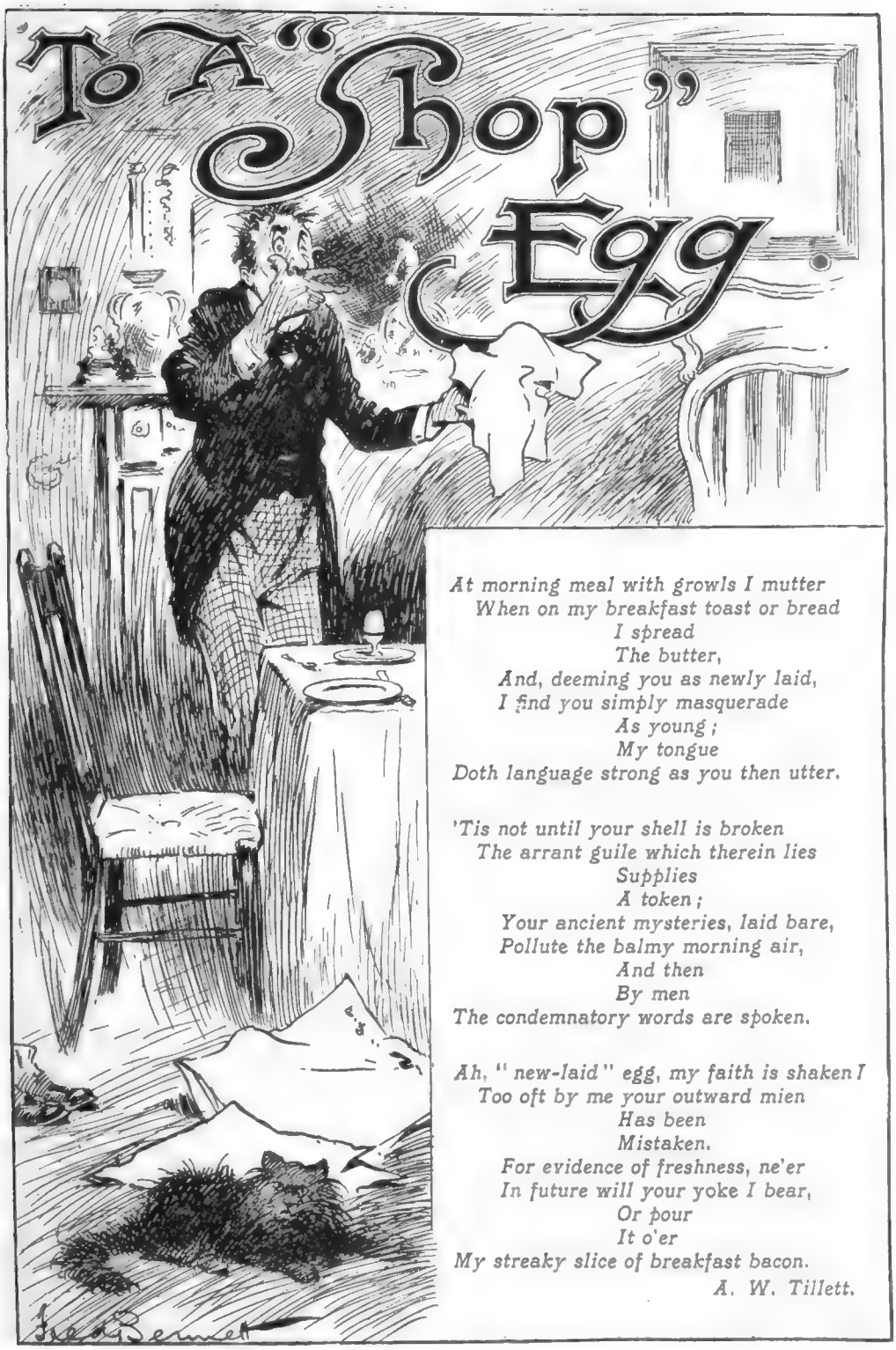

At morning meal with growls I mutter
When on my breakfast toast or bread
I spread
The butter,
And, deeming you as newly laid,
I find you simply masquerade
As young;
My tongue
Doth language strong as you then utter.

'Tis not until your shell is broken
The arrant guile which therein lies
Supplies
A token;
Your ancient mysteries, laid bare,
Pollute the balmy morning air,
And then
By men
The condemnatory words are spoken.

Ah, "new-laid" egg, my faith is shaken I
Too oft by me your outward mien
Has been
Mistaken.
For evidence of freshness, ne'er
In future will your yoke I bear,
Or pour
It o'er
My streaky slice of breakfast bacon.

A. W. Tillett.

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By Victor L. Whitechurch.

No. IV.—THE STRANGE STORY OF THE INDIAN BRACELET.

An Account of the Reclamation of a Vicar's Prodigal Son.

Perhaps one of the strangest incidents which happened to the Reverend Merrick Holt in the course of his experience as a locum tenens, was the affair that took place at Westonthorpe Vicarage. Certainly, the chain of events was one which put various shrewd capabilities of the young clergyman to the test; and although the police, for obvious reasons, never learnt the real solution of the matter, they more than once suspected that Merrick Holt could have given them some more complete explanation than he chose to do, when he told them that their services were no longer required.

But this is anticipating. Merrick Holt owed his temporary charge of the parish of Westonthorpe to the Bishop of the diocese himself.

"The Vicar, Mr. Thomas Marston," he explained to Holt, who had gone to the palace by appointment, "is one of my most conscientious clergy, and has applied to me to find a man for him during his six weeks' absence. I thought you might undertake the work."

"I shall be pleased to do so, my lord."

"He is a man of somewhat rigid demeanour," went on the Bishop, "and has had, I understand, certain domestic troubles that have worried him greatly, added to which he is not at all well off. He has not taken a holiday for some years, but some kind parishioners have just presented him with a little cheque, on condition that he should go abroad and have a thorough change. I am glad of it, because I know he needs a rest."

"When does he start?"

"Next Monday. But he is a little overscrupulous, and he would like you, if possible, to go to Westonthorpe on Saturday, so as to be initiated into his Sunday methods. He is most particular that everything should be carried on in every detail during his absence. Can you go?"

"Oh, yes, my lord."

"Very well," said the Bishop, "I will write to him. Lunch with me in an hour's time, Mr. Holt, and excuse me till then."

And the busy prelate pointed to the pile of correspondence with which he was dealing.

Holt went down to Westonthorpe on the Saturday. It was a pretty little parish, about three miles from the town of Dunfield, with the church and vicarage standing at the

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extreme end of the village quite by themselves, and reached by a by-road from the main thoroughfare.

He found the Vicar was a widower, of some fifty or more years of age, a stern-looking, austere man, with pale face, slight side whiskers, and a firm, hard-looking mouth. He was punctiliously courteous to Merrick Holt, but his manner lacked any cordiality. He entered carefully into negotiations.

"I shall leave my cook-housekeeper and one maid," he said; "and as I do not wish them to have more to do than is necessary, I purpose placing only my study and the dining-room at your disposal."

"That will be quite sufficient," replied Holt.

"I shall esteem it a favour if you do not invite any friends to stay in the house."

"I am not likely to."

"Quite so. I merely mentioned it. A neighbour of mine had a most unpleasant experience last year. He engaged a clergyman as a locum tenens for six weeks, and the latter took in a number of paying guests, turning the vicarage into a temporary hotel."*

"You can rely upon me not to do *that*," said Holt with a smile.

"There is another thing," went on the Vicar, his mouth growing still more hard. "It concerns my own relatives. My daughter, who is in a situation, knows that I am going away; but my son does not. I must tell you, in confidence, that there is an estrangement between us."

Holt thought of what the Bishop had said, and bowed his head slightly.

"I have forbidden him the house in consequence. Should he by any chance pay a visit to Westonthorpe during my absence, I shall esteem it a favour that you refuse to admit him."

"Would it not be best to tell him you are going away?" hazarded Holt.

"I prefer not to communicate with him," said the Vicar icily.

"Very well. I will carry out your instructions."

"Thank you. Now let me show you your room—and the rest of the house."

He took Holt into a stiffly-furnished drawing-room first, remarking that he should lock it up. Then he opened the door of a small room that had a very different appearance.

The walls of it were covered with curiosities from every part of the world—spears, knives—a wonderful variety; while a couple of cabinets with glass fronts were full of strange little idols, gold and silver ornaments, and all such paraphernalia as proved that the owner must have collected them from many different countries.

"My brother's room—or 'den,' as he calls it," explained the Vicar. "He is a great traveller, and his name may be familiar to you as a writer on West Africa, Central Asia, and China—Peter Marston, Fellow of the Geographical Society. He is a bachelor with no settled home. On the somewhat rare occasions when he is in England he makes his abode with me. By the way, should he by any chance come while I am absent, of course you will admit him. I do not know where he is at present, and he rarely sends me warning of his visits."

"He has a very fine collection of curios," said Holt, looking round the room.

"Yes; let me show you some of them."

And the Vicar began explaining some of the objects of interest. Presently he opened one of the cabinets, and after showing a few of the contents, he took out a small brass box. Opening it, he displayed a very massive gold bracelet, studded with emeralds.

"Very quaint, isn't it?" he asked. "My brother brought it home last time he was here. It is, I believe, from India. I think he told me he picked it up quite by accident. He has been offered a considerable sum for it, but he is far too much attached to his treasures to part from them. Well, Mr. Holt, I shall intrust you with the key of this room in case he should return."

After they had gone over the house, the Vicar took Holt outside to show him the grounds. The study, dining-room, and Mr. Peter Marston's "den" looked out on a sloping lawn. Beyond the lawn was a shrubbery, through which a winding path led to the banks of a little river.

"We keep a boat, you see," said the Vicar, pointing to a small skiff that was fastened by a chain to a little wooden landing-stage. "Pray make use of it. Yes; the wood opposite is very pretty, and well worth exploring. Some time or other you might row down stream, past the church. About a quarter of a mile down you will find a post to which you can attach the boat—on the opposite side, and a path from there through the wood is the short cut to Dunfield. I generally walk that way when I go in. Come and see the church."

The latter stood about a hundred yards

* A fact.—V. L. W.

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down the river, and close beside the stream. The vicarage garden was separated from the churchyard by a low wall, through which a little gateway formed the Vicar's private entrance to the churchyard. There was nothing remarkable about the church. It was quite small and scrupulously clean.

"Our only curiosity," said the Vicar, "is an old chained Bible, which attracts a few visitors in the summer. It is in this glass case, the key of which is kept at the vicarage, and I make a small charge if anyone wishes to inspect it closely."

The following Monday morning the Vicar took his departure, and Merrick Holt settled down to his quiet country life. There were plenty of books in the study, while the stream, though small, had distinct attractions to a man who could handle an oar as well as Holt. A few callers put in an appearance in the course of the week, among them a retired colonel named Henderson, a genial sort of man.

"I am the Vicar's churchwarden," he said, "so I hope we shall become well acquainted during your stay with us. Will you excuse an informal invitation and come to a meal on Sunday evening? Mrs. Henderson will be delighted. I will go into the vestry after the service, and we can walk back together."

Merrick Holt readily agreed to this arrangement. "It is very kind of you," he said. "I shall be only too pleased to come."

On the Saturday morning, as he was preparing some sermon notes in the study, the servant tapped at the door with a message to the effect that a gentleman wished to see him.

"Show him in," said Holt.

A well-dressed man came into the room. Holt glanced at him curiously, for his swarthy complexion proclaimed him a foreigner. He bowed very politely.

"The Reverend will pardon the interruption," he said in very fair English, and that of a character which Holt knew was not the peculiarly inflated language of the ordinary Babu, "but I have been into your church, and it would please me to make closer inspection of the book bound with chains."

"Certainly," replied Holt. "I will come over with you and unlock the case."

He took down the key which was hanging on the wall. As he did so he noticed that the man was glancing curiously round the study.

"We will go out this way," went on Holt. The French window was open, and they stepped out on to the lawn. Here the stranger paused.

"It is a beautiful garden you have, Mr. Marston," he said, looking round.

"I am not Mr. Marston," said Holt. "He is away."

"Oh! I had heard the name of the Reverend was Marston. Ah!" he exclaimed suddenly, "there are flowers reminding me of my country."

"Marigolds? I have not been in India, but I know you prize them highly. Are they not sacred flowers?"

"Many things are sacred to those who know," said the Indian enigmatically. Holt led the way to the bed of marigolds, which lay in front of the house, and plucked a few. When he rose, the man was standing with his back towards him, looking at the house. Holt presented him with the flowers, which he gravely acknowledged, and then took him to the church. He evinced much interest in the old Bible, which he handled reverently.

"I have read this book," he said, "there is much of truth therein."

"Are you a Christian?" hazarded Merrick Holt.

"I am not. But all truth I respect. My thanks are due to you. I heard of this ancient book at Dunfield, where I am staying for a few days. I observe there is a fee. In all religions charity deserves recognition. May I place it in the box for the poor?"

And Merrick Holt observed, with some surprise, that the coin which he dropped into the box was a golden one. Then he took his departure with the same grave courtesy that he had evinced during the interview.

Late that evening Holt had another visitor. He heard a loud voice in altercation with the servant at the door.

"Governor away, eh? Who's here, then? Tell him I want to see him—and get me some supper, d'ye hear? And get my room ready. I shall be here till Monday."

"Oh, sir," said the servant, as she came into the room, "here's Master Fred—I don't know what——"

"Hullo!" said Master Fred himself as he came into the study, "I suppose you're what they call a Local Demon—taking the governor's preaching for him, eh? Where's he gone, then?"

Merrick Holt looked quietly at the young man, and motioned the servant to leave the room. Fred Marston was dressed in a loud, horsey-cut costume, and had not troubled to remove his hat. He carried a small gladstone, and he reeked of whisky. He was a handsome fellow, but dissipated habits

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"Hullo!" said Master Fred . . . "I suppose you're what they call a Local Demon?"

had set their mark on his face, and it was evident that he was a very prodigal son.

"I presume you are Mr. Fred Marston?" asked Holt, in his calm, even voice, as he lounged back in a comfortable arm-chair, quite undisturbed.

"You bet I am. And who are you?" answered young Marston, as he threw himself into a chair opposite.

"My name is Merrick Holt. I am in charge here while your father is away for six weeks," drawled the locum tenens.

"All right, Mr. Merrick Holt. Where's the governor gone?"

"Abroad."

"Not like him. It's a pity, for I wanted to see him particularly. Hang it, he might have let me know. Well, Mr. Merrick Holt," he went on, "I want some supper. And I'm going to keep you company here for a few days, though hang me if I mean to hear you preach."

"Excuse me," said Holt, as he leant back with half-closed eyes and his finger-tips meeting, "I have no more intention of asking you to hear me preach than I have of asking you to remain in this house."

"What do you mean?"

"It is not my affair, Mr. Marston, but your father has expressly forbidden you the house, and charged me not to allow you to stay here. You will understand that my position is a painful one, but I must really ask you to go."

Then the prodigal broke forth into many curses, declaring that he intended to remain.

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Holt stood it for a few minutes, and then rose slowly from his chair.

"I am very sorry," he said, "but I have no option in the matter. Do please go without making a scene."

"I shan't go."

"Very well," replied Holt quietly, "in that case I shall be under the painful necessity of removing you."

"Ho, ho, ho!" laughed Marston, as he got up and advanced towards Holt, "I'd like to see a pale-faced devil dodger like you trying it on."

And he lurched rudely against the immaculately-dressed cleric.

The next moment his arms were pinned to his side with a grip of iron, and the knee of the aforesaid cleric was pressing unpleasantly in the small of his back.

"Now will you go quietly?" asked Holt, without the least tremor of excitement in his voice.

"Good Lord! Drop it! Curse you, I say."

"Or must I put you out?"

"I'll go—but I'll be even with you for this—— Leave go."

Holt threw the door open, and the young man went out, sobered and sullen, muttering oaths under his breath. Holt walked after him down to the gate.

"I'm sorry," he said quietly; "but if you think it over you will see I couldn't do anything else."

* * * * *

The next day was extremely hot and sultry. There had been no rain for three weeks, and everything was hot and parched. In church the atmosphere was stifling. Towards the evening it grew worse, and when Holt went into the pulpit, which was against the wall of the church, he felt the heat so much that he opened a window that he could easily reach from where he stood.

It was a single pane in the opaque glass, and evidently had not been opened for a long time, for the hinges were stiff. Glancing through this window, Holt noticed that he had a view of the river in the gathering dusk, but, of course, he was the only one in the church who could see it. Towards the close of his sermon, which he preached from a few notes, he happened to glance on one side through the window.

As he did so he saw a boat being rowed down stream by a woman. It passed so close to the church that, had it been lighter, he could have distinguished the woman's features. He thought nothing of it at the time, but afterwards he remembered the impression that, although the boat was being pulled very swiftly, there was no noise made by the oars in the rowlocks.

He went straight from the church to the Colonel's house. Heavy clouds were coming up from the horizon, and there was a distant murmur of thunder.

"By the way," said the Colonel, as they walked along, "I hear that scapegrace Fred Marston is staying at the 'White Lion.' He is a great trial to his father, though, between ourselves, the Vicar has treated him too harshly. He put on the curb far too strongly in Fred's younger days, and as a result the boy kicked over the traces. I've always believed there was good in the lad, and a little kindness would have gone a long way towards his reformation."

They had scarcely sat down to supper when the storm broke. For over an hour it rained in torrents. Finally, when Merrick Holt rose to go, at about half-past ten, although the rain had cleared, the night was pitch dark.

"Here," said the Colonel, "take my electric lamp. That's right. The nearest way is through the churchyard. Do you think you can find it?"

"Oh, yes—with the help of this," replied Holt, "good-night."

It was some quarter of a mile to the church. He found his way, passed through the churchyard into the vicarage garden and across the lawn. His lantern lit up the house brightly, and he saw that one of the French windows was open. As he hurried up to it, he further saw that it was the window of Mr. Peter Marston's room, and that one of the panes was shattered.

Between the house and lawn was a little strip of gravel path. Instinctively he paused. The vivid electric light showed on the wet path, which, just opposite the window, was trampled and disarranged.

He stepped to the threshold, and turned his lamp on the interior of the room. A scene of confusion met him. The two cabinets were open, and half their contents scattered on the floor. But what attracted his eye most was the small, brass box which had held the bracelet. It was lying on the floor, open and empty!

Not for a moment did Holt's characteristic coolness desert him. Before he attempted to give the alarm, he made a close inspection of the room with his powerful light. There were prints of muddy footsteps—he bent down—something else suddenly caught his

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About twenty yards from the house lay a man with a bag beside him.

eye, and he was about to examine it when a faint groan and cry for help came to his ears from outside. The next moment he was out again, on the lawn. About twenty yards from the house lay a man with a bag beside him, and half-a-dozen glittering objects around him. And the lantern revealed the face of Fred Marston.

"I'm badly hurt," he groaned, "stabbed!"

Merrick Holt felt that whatever had been his instructions and whatever might have happened, the wounded man must be cared for. In five minutes he had roused the servants, in ten the gardener was helping him to carry Fred Marston into the house, but not before he had hastily collected the various articles on the lawn and put them in the bag, which he took care the gardener should not see. The latter rushed off for medical help.

"Nothing very serious," said the doctor to Holt an hour later, "but he's lost a lot of blood. Another inch, though, and it would have been fatal. How did it happen?"

"I don't know, doctor. It's a case of burglary. He will have to tell us himself. I've sent for the police, but I understand the solitary constable is out on a night round."

"Marston is asking for you," said the doctor, "but don't let him talk too much."

The sick man turned an anxious face to Holt as the latter entered the room.

"Have you sent for the police?" he asked.

Holt nodded.

"I—I—caught him coming out with the bag," stammered the young man, "and I went for him. Then he stabbed me."

"Who was it?" asked Holt laconically.

"I don't know—it was so dark."

"What were you doing there?"

"I had a right in my father's garden," said Marston sullenly.

"Quite so," replied Holt drily, "I shall

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get you to make a statement to the police, and perhaps they may be able to trace this—er——"

"Burglar?"

"The man who assaulted you," said Holt in the same dry tone; "meanwhile I'm going to act as nurse. You get to sleep. I shall be in the next room with the door open, if you want anything."

He spoke kindly. To tell the truth, he was much puzzled as to how to act. It was certain that the valuable bracelet was missing, for it was not among the other articles of value on the lawn. That there had been a desperate struggle was also certain, and this part of Fred Marston's story he believed. He held himself responsible for the safety of the house, but, at the same time, he wanted to avoid a family scandal.

He sent the gardener into Dunfield to ask the police inspector there to come out as soon as possible. Then he lay down on his bed, but without undressing. Towards morning Marston called to him, asking for a drink of water. He had slept a bit, and was refreshed.

"I say," he said, "what became of the jewellery?"

"I put it back in *your bag*," replied Holt.

Marston started.

"For God's sake——" he began.

"All right," said Holt, "I guessed there was another story, but if the bracelet is found I may hush that part of it up."

"The—the bracelet wasn't there at all," gasped Marston.

"Not there? You never had it?"

"I'll swear I didn't."

"Look here," said Holt in his quiet, soothing voice, "make a clean breast of it, Marston. It's clear to me that there were two of you. You've given way to a terrible temptation, and I want to save you if possible. I don't believe you're half as bad as you're painted. Won't you tell me?"

The other hesitated at first. Then he confessed. He was in the hands of a moneylender. His father had refused him any assistance. In his despair and rage he had been tempted to break into his uncle's room.

"It was quite sudden," he said. "I was on my way back to Dunfield, and I took a short cut across the vicarage lawn meaning to take the boat over the stream and walk through the wood. Then, as I passed the house, I saw the window was broken."

"Eh!"

"Yes. It was this that tempted me. The next moment I was in the room."

"What state was it in?"

"Quite tidy. I struck a vesta, and found the brass box. But the bracelet was not in it!"

"Hullo!" ejaculated Holt, losing his calmness just for a moment.

"Then I collected a few other valuables and put them into my bag. The instant I stepped out of the window I felt myself seized by someone. I thought it might be you. My first thought was to escape with my bag, of course, and I struggled with all my might, dragging the fellow across the lawn. Then I felt him stab me, and must have fainted—eh? What are you going to do?"

"I've just remembered something," said Merrick Holt. 'When you see the police tell them the bracelet is gone, and that someone stabbed you. That will be enough. I will save you if I can."

The next minute he was down in Peter Marston's room on his knees. Daylight was streaming in. What he was looking at were several marks of *dusty* footprints on the dark carpet, quite distinct from the mud-stained ones.

"I believe he's right," he said presently, "someone was in here *before it rained!*"

He lit a cigarette and went out on the lawn to think. Aimlessly he strolled towards the shrubbery. The trees were very thick here, and the rain had scarcely penetrated. Suddenly he stopped. There was a footprint in the loose soil—another—a third. He ran down the path to the landing stage.

The boat had disappeared!

Then it was that he recollected what he had seen the previous evening.

"It's a chance," he muttered, "but I'll follow it up."

He ran through and beyond the churchyard, and along the river bank for a quarter of a mile. Nor was he disappointed. Moored to the post opposite was the vicarage boat.

"I might as well take my morning bath here," he said, "and there's no one stirring yet."

He undressed, swam the stream, and returned with the boat. Then he put on his clothes. As he did so his eye caught something white on the handle of one of the oars.

"That's why I heard nothing—muffled!" he exclaimed. "Eh? Oh, this looks *very* bad. Let me think!"

Five minutes later he rowed the boat up stream and landed at the vicarage. The cook-housekeeper was down when he reached the house.

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"I think," he said blandly, "that if Mr. Marston has any relatives they ought to know of his accident. I shall not worry the Vicar on his holiday—but has he not a sister?"

"Yes, sir."

"I might communicate with her. Have you her address?"

"She's a teacher in a school at Clapham, sir; I'll give you her address."

"Thank you. I may not be back to breakfast."

Nor was he. He made his way to Dunfield and took the first train up to town. By eleven that morning he was calling at the "Ellerton High School for Girls" at Clapham, and asking to see Miss Ethel Marston.

She stared at him when she came into the room. She was a good-looking girl of about twenty.

"You want to see me?"

"Yes," he said in his quiet, lazy voice, "I've called for Mr. Peter Marston's Indian bracelet. I think it had better go back to its place at the vicarage. I'm your father's locum tenens, you see, and I'm responsible for its safety."

She gave a gasp and turned deathly pale.

"I—I—don't understand," she said.

"When you muffle the oars of a boat," he went on quite calmly, "it is dangerous to use a handkerchief with one's name on it," and he produced a little torn strip of linen.

She gave a great sob.

"What—what are you going to do?" she said.

"Won't you tell me about it, Miss Marston? I assure you you can trust me."

"Yes—yes—I will tell you."

It was a simple tale. Just an intense love for her erring brother. He had written a piteous letter to her the week before telling her of his money troubles, and ending with some desperate threats that frightened her.

"I knew that my father would not help him," she went on, "and I had no money myself. If only Uncle Peter had been at home I would have gone to him, and I know he would have done something. That put the idea into my head. I thought if I could only raise some money on the bracelet that I would tell my uncle everything the first time I saw him. It was wicked, I know, but I felt desperate. So I asked for a Sunday off and went down to Dunfield yesterday. In the evening I walked out to Westonthorpe, taking care no one should see me. I knew my father was away. While service was going on I—I—broke the window and took the bracelet out of the case. Then I realised that I had hardly time to catch the last train back. That made me think of the short cut through the wood, and I muffled the oars lest anyone should hear me."

"I saw you row down the stream."

"Did you? When I made the boat fast to the post I began taking my scarf and handkerchief off the oars. Then I fancied I saw someone, and tore off the handkerchief instead of waiting to untie it."

Presently she gave him the bracelet.

"Are you going to prosecute me?"

"No," he said kindly, "I am going to hush this little family tragedy up." And he told her about her brother.

"Thank God," he said, as he took his departure, "that it has been no worse. You have done a great wrong, Miss Marston, and I am glad no one knows of it but myself. Somehow I do not ask you to tell your father about it, but I *do* ask you to make a clean breast of it to your uncle—and I trust your brother will do so also."

"You are very kind," she sobbed as she wrung his hand.

* * * * *

"Nothing is missing," he told the police that night; "at first we thought a valuable bracelet had been taken, but I have found it. Have you any traces of the—er—would-be assassin?"

"None whatever."

"But a clue, doubtless?"

"Oh yes!"

"Ah! That is always a proud possession of the police."

And the inspector wondered afterwards how much of that quiet remark was sarcasm.

A fortnight later Holt was writing in the study with the windows open, when he heard a step on the gravel outside, and a hearty voice exclaiming:

"Hullo, Tom, my boy, how are you? At it as usual? How many reams of morality have you written since I saw you last?"

Holt turned and saw a hearty, jovial-faced man with a bronzed countenance looking at him in surprise.

"Why—who are you?" he said.

"Locum tenens to your brother, I presume?"

"Tom away? I hadn't heard. Yes, I'm Peter Marston. Glad to make your acquaintance."

He threw himself down in a chair and lit a cigar.

"By the way," he said presently, "I heard

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somewhere that there'd been a burglary at the vicarage—something of mine stolen. Is there any truth in it?"

"Yes," said Holt gravely, "an Indian bracelet of yours was taken, but I succeeded in recovering it. I should like you to see that it is safe."

And he led the way to the "den," which he opened.

"Here it is," he said, producing the brass box and opening it—"why——!"

It was an exclamation of surprise. For, once more the bracelet had vanished, and the only contents of the box was a bunch of faded marigolds!

* * * * *

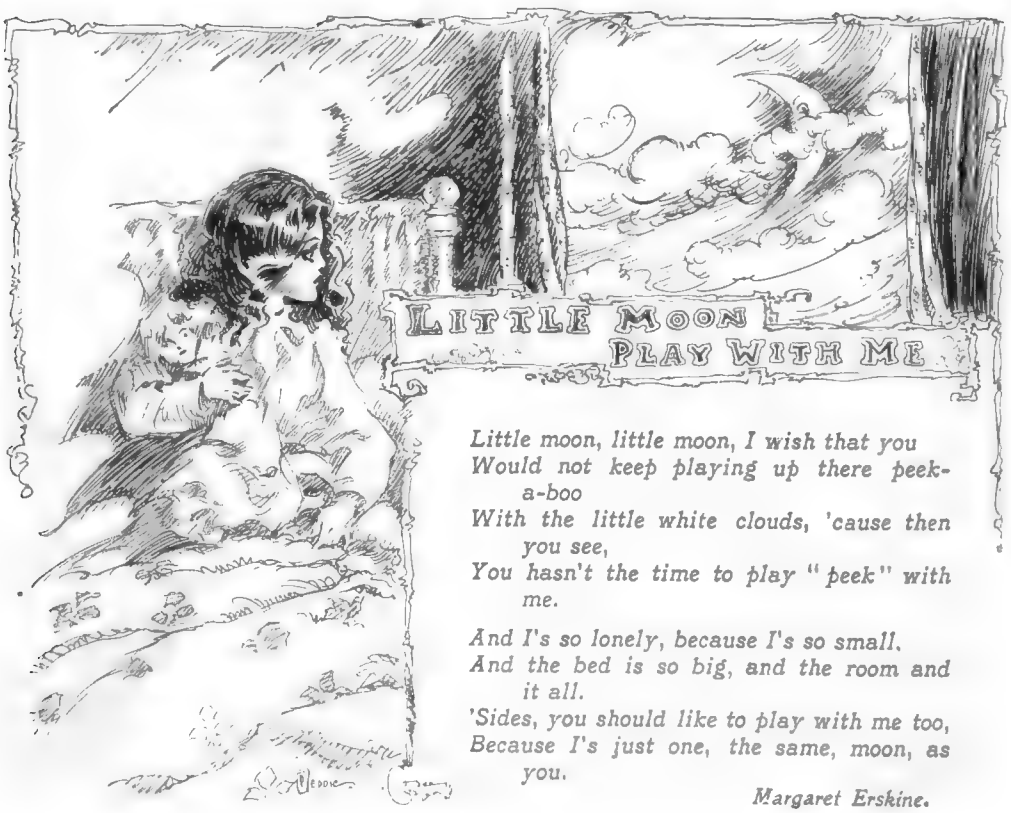
"I am not surprised," said Mr. Peter Marston to Merrick Holt a couple of days later, after he had had an interview with both Fred and Ethel Marston. "Of course, I am speaking to you in confidence. This Indian fellow was after the bracelet all the time, and it was he who attacked my nephew. Then, through the police, it became known that the bracelet was found and was once more in the house. The marigolds were a delicate but bold touch of the Eastern mind."

"But what induced him to steal it?"

"Ah!" replied the other, thoughtfully puffing at his cheroot, "there is more in that than one imagines. I picked it up cheaply enough, but the native who sold it to me died of 'snake bite' a few days later. And a hint reached me months afterwards that it had been stolen from the wrist of an idol in the temple at Ghampore. I know something of the East, and if ever I visit Ghampore I shall not be astonished if I find it on the idol once again. Well, Mr. Holt, you have saved my brother's family from an unpleasant scandal. How can I show you my gratitude?"

"By putting your nephew on his legs again," said Merrick Holt. "I believe he has had a lesson he will never forget."

"I have already done so," said Peter Marston, "and I think my brother will agree to receive him once more when he hears the only part of the story that he must know—which is in everyone's mouth here—Fred's tussle with an unknown burglar in defence of my property!"



Little moon, little moon, I wish that you
Would not keep playing up there peek-a-boo
With the little white clouds, 'cause then you see,
You hasn't the time to play "peek" with me.

And I's so lonely, because I's so small,
And the bed is so big, and the room and it all.
'Sides, you should like to play with me too,
Because I's just one, the same, moon, as you.

Margaret Erskine.

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Photo, Russell & Sons, Southsea.
Sergeant-Major G. Ellison, R.M.L.I.

SURVIVORS' TALES OF GREAT EVENTS

Photo, J. W. West, Aldershot.
Colour-Sergeant Robotham, R.M.L.I.

No. XLI.—TO BENIN, THE CITY OF BLOOD.

FROM THE NARRATIVES OF COLOUR-SERGEANT ROBOTHAM AND SERGEANT-MAJOR ELLISON, ROYAL MARINE LIGHT INFANTRY.

AS TOLD TO WALTER WOOD

On January 2nd, 1897, a pacific expedition started on a visit to the King of Benin, in West Africa, whose rule was marked by terrible atrocities. The expedition, with the exception of two members who escaped into the bush, was massacred. To punish the king, a force was sent to Benin under Rear-Admiral Rawson, commanding the Cape Squadron. It consisted of seamen and marines, with Maxim guns, light artillery, and rocket tubes. Haussa troops were included. A small body was sent from England to co-operate. The senior non-commissioned officer of this detachment was Colour-Sergeant Robotham, who remained in that capacity with the rearguard when the main body advanced to the assault of Benin. The story of the actual capture of Benin is told by Sergeant-Major Ellison, who has an exceptionally fine record of service in East, West, and Central Africa, and has been decorated for conspicuous gallantry in Wa Nandi Country.

(*The Narrative of* COLOUR-SERGEANT ROBOTHAM.)

I LEFT England in the bitter cold and blinding snowstorm of a January day in 'ninety-seven, in charge of about a hundred and twenty Red Marines.

I have served afloat and ashore in all parts of the world. I have been up the Nile and in the Soudan in the hot weather; but I have never known anything like the clammy, fatal heat which we endured in West Africa on that short, sharp, successful expedition, whose purpose was to punish a cruel and blood-thirsty monster who was called a king.

When your mind goes back to the past, you remember very clearly things which at the time of happening seem so trivial and yet become so significant. I recall an incident of the night before I left Portsmouth for London, on the way to embarkation at the Royal Albert Docks. We were having a little farewell gathering in the mess, and the band-sergeant turned to me and said:

"What tune would you like us to play to-morrow morning when you march off?"

"Oh," I answered, "give us, 'Where is now the merry party?'"

I suggested that tune because my wife sometimes sang it, and it is one of my favourites. The band played it, although the cold was so intense that their fingers were almost frozen to the intruments.

Where is the party now? Some are sleeping on the West Coast, the rest have scattered, and some have mustered for the last time. So much can happen in eleven years.

At Waterloo Junction, when I was getting my detachment through London, many people, with the best intentions in the world, tried to give drinks to the men, and one old lady in particular cast her sympathetic eye on a shivering marine.

"Do let me give him just one drop," she pleaded. "It'll do him good—just this little bottle."

And she did her best, dear soul, to present him with a flask; but I was resolute, and she and her spirit were left behind.

How the snow fell that blizzardy morning as we crossed the river at Woolwich to join the P. and O. *Malacca* in the docks! The snow was inches deep, and we were completely white with it. I never saw such a storm.

White helmets and great-coats which looked the same colour; shivering and blue with cold, everyone of us; and yet, within a

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fortnight, three of the men who were trying to flog a little warmth into their systems were dead of sunstroke. That is a violent enough contrast, isn't it?

In the *Malacca* we picked up a machine-gun section of the Royal Marine Artillery, and some bluejackets, who were going out to join the *St. George*, the flagship from the Cape Station. We ran across the Bay of Biscay into glorious weather, and by the time we were at the Canaries we were eating bananas and oranges, which had been brought on board straight from the trees.

We coaled, then steamed off for the Bight of Benin, which is a division of the Gulf of Guinea, in a region notorious for its menace to the lives of white men, and of which the doctor said:

> This is the Bight of Benin—
> Few come out, though many go in.

Steam works magic transformations. We who a few days earlier had been white with snow were sweltering under an African sun, pushing hard ahead for Benin City. We had picked up the flagship, and our senior officer, Captain Byrne, had been to the Admiral for orders, which we had got. Now we were carrying them out.

In a rough, hard country like that, when swiftness of movement is the first essential, you must be burdened as little as possible with baggage. Our own kit was just about as scanty as mortal man could do with; but then, you see, the force was composed mostly of bluejackets and marines, who learn the way of making a little go a long way. There was no water to be had except that which we could carry. Very well, we took it with us, although it meant conveyance in painted canvas bags. As for kit, one bag was reckoned enough for five men—so into one bag five men's possessions were stuffed and stowed.

When our forces had been assembled—bluejackets, marines, and Haussas—we went up the Forcadoes River in a small steamer, flying the German flag. Call it a river if you wish; but it was like a big, sluggish ditch of inferior coffee, bad in the daytime and insufferable at night.

We had scarcely got the chill of the bitter English winter out of our bones when we found ourselves huddled on the upper deck of the foreign craft, with cockroaches swarming over us almost as thickly as the snowflakes had settled on our great-coats in London; and, so that our discomfort should be complete, legions of rats scampered over us.

That very night of our landing we had our first experience of a tropical storm—not much lightning, and no thunder, but rain which fell in a solid mass, soaking us as we lay on deck, packed so closely together that we could not move. We simply sweltered and steamed, and, since it is human nature to be dissatisfied, some of us fervently wished that we were back in the homely blizzard.

We were glad indeed when the morning came and we got ashore. It was not much of a landing-place—only a mud village, dreary, desolate, and dirty at that, the little, naked children peering at us with wide, wondering eyes from the openings in the mud huts which did duty as doorways. But there was room to move and march, and it was the more interesting, too, because here we joined our comrades of the Naval Brigade.

We were all assembled now, and there was no further excuse for delay; so we struck into the bush, and pushed ahead in the direction of the city of which we had heard such dreadful stories, but which was a place that none of us personally knew. It is hardly the sort of region where white men penetrate unless they go on such a judgment errand as ours.

What a toilsome, sorry advance it was! And how thankful we were that Benin City was so near, so that we could get the business over!

We were in a dense bush, gloomy, dangerous, roadless, where we saw no path until our black carriers, who for the time acted as pioneers, cut one through the heavy undergrowth, just wide enough for two men to walk abreast.

It would be misleading and absurd to talk of marching, because no such thing was possible. We were kept very much alive and watchful, because we did not know where the enemy might be, or when he would take it into his head to trap us, in spite of our precautions.

We cut our way and struggled on, officers and men alike. There was none of the feather-bed business about the expedition. Admiral Rawson marched just like the rest of us, with his coat off, and carrying a thick stick in his hand. That is the sort of example the British seaman and marine loves; the kind of thing to make him cheerfully endure any hardship, for when the superior sets a good example, how can the follower fail to obey?

There were all sorts of strange happenings to interest and startle us. And there were

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plenty of stirring lessons in natural history taught. By the side of our rough and narrow path we saw many very beautiful insects, one a sort of big, brilliant fly. It is better to let such creatures rest in peace, as any man who has served in the tropics will tell you; but there were fresh and rash young men amongst us, and in spite of all warnings one put out his hand and caught a gorgeous insect. He was the one to be captured, though. The fly, or whatever it was, got away, and left the poor marine with a bad sting and an enormously swollen hand, which scared him into greater caution for the future.

Another time a marine who had been some little distance from the main body rushed back in frantic excitement, and reported that he had seen a herd of wild elephants.

"But the funny thing about 'em," he said, "is that they are not like the elephants you see at home. These are sandy-coloured things, an' I should think it's best to give 'em a jolly wide berth." But I did not myself see the brutes, although we had come across lots of sharks in the river.

The first Sunday we spent in that unwholesome district was February 14th, which is St. Valentine's Day, but we had no time to think about valentines. We had none to send, and we were not expecting the postman to bring us any. Our duty was to shove ahead, towards a place which we named the Cross Roads, because two paths crossed each other in the bush.

Here we soon had plenty of evidence that we were getting very near the City of Blood. A lance-corporal named Smart hurried in and reported that he had seen nine dead bodies in the bush.

A skirmishing party was sent out instantly; but although it made the closest search nothing could be seen of the corpses. Yet there is no doubt that the corporal had made the ghastly find, only he had not taken bearings which would enable him to get back to the spot. The bush thereabouts was so dense and confusing that it was almost impossible to return to any particular place which had been left.

This was the first real evidence we had that we were close upon the Benin king's headquarters. We had proof, too, of the fatal nature of the country and the climate. One of my men came up and said: "Baker's fallen down."

I did not know what it might mean. Had the enemy suddenly appeared, or had a prowling sniper made a lucky shot. I hurried back and found Baker, a private, lying on the ground, suffering, as I saw, from sunstroke. I unfastened his collar and tried to bring him round, but he died almost as soon as I reached him, without uttering a word. We buried him at once in his uniform with very little ceremony, and marched on, leaving him, our first casualty, in the lonely bush at Cross Roads.

However well supplied you may be with arms and ammunition, you cannot do anything if you have not sufficient food and drink. In the way of eatables we managed well enough; but we were crippled for want of water. Our canvas-bag supply had given out, and we had been forced to make the best of some foul stuff got from a brook, and only drinkable when boiled. Even a small expedition like ours could not be taken in its entirety for the swoop on Benin City, and the Admiral was obliged to split it up into two detachments, leaving one at Cross Roads, and going ahead with the other, which was a flying column. While the column rushed the city we were to fortify ourselves.

We went about things, when the column had marched away, pretty much as men are forced to do who settle in a new and far-off land. We made a clearing, which meant cutting down trees; then we placed some of the trunks horizontally on the ground, and with them and stakes we constructed a wall or barricade breast-high, so that we could rest our Lee-Metfords on it if it came to shooting. All the time we kept a very keen look-out, because the natives were reported to be swarming in the bush and preparing to attack us.

Then an anxious calm fell on us. We were left to do guard duties and had more time to think than was good for us. We wondered how those who had gone to the front were progressing and how they were faring; at the same time drawing mental pictures, each man for himself, the pictures varying in luridness, according to individual imagination, of what would come to pass if the main body were ambushed, as other parties had been unexpectedly fallen upon in that land of treachery and bloodshed.

Benin was only about twenty miles away from our encampment at Cross Roads, and despite its unattractiveness and dangers, there was not a soul amongst us who would not rather have been there than left behind where we were.

We heard no news of any sort, not so much as a murmur as to what was happening to the Admiral and his people, yet it soon

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became clear that our blacks were being mysteriously informed of what was being done. How they got their intelligence I do not pretend to understand. I have known the same kind of thing in natives of the East.

Then the excitement grew and grew, until it took the form of an extraordinary outburst and display. The blacks began springing and leaping about, doubling their bodies and crying and singing—if you can call such sounds singing—as if they were demented.

There were several hundreds of these natives with us, and the row they made was hideous. Suddenly one of them let a yell out, a particularly deep-lunged yell, and then they broke into a proper war-dance.

All at once the real meaning flashed upon me—Benin City had fallen, and the Admiral was a conqueror!

The natives had heard the news in some mysterious fashion at least six or eight hours before the rest of us knew it.

(*The Narrative of* SERGEANT-MAJOR ELLISON.)

The flying column left Cross Roads without much ceremony of farewell—just handshakes and "good-luck." Much disappointment was felt by those who were left behind as a rearguard. We went off in high spirits, thankful for the luck that had enabled us to join the column. Of course somebody has to be left behind; all cannot go in the van.

The country was flat, but absolutely waterless, and we had to carry our supply in kerosene tins. Our allowance was three pints a day for all purposes, and you can imagine what that means in such a land as that through which we marched. None of it was wasted on washing of any sort. The sky was our roof, and we mustered one blanket amongst three men. But there was no grumbling, no complaining, only occasional remarks about thirst and many yearning wishes to come across a half-way house.

In Indian file we marched slowly along the narrow path, constantly fired at by unseen snipers in the dense bush on each side; but our casualties were few. We left Cross Roads on the morning of February 17th, and by the evening were at a village called Awoko, quite in the heart of the enemy's country. It became more imperative than ever that we should be cautious, and take all possible steps to prevent a rush on our camp.

I was ordered with my section of twenty Portsmouth marines to form an outpost, and lie in ambush about a hundred yards from camp. My orders were clear and simple—not to fire unless fired upon, because one shot from us at some imaginary foe would have aroused the whole camp, whose rest was most essential, in view of the desperate work that would be involved in the final rush on Benin City. The British fighter must always have his joke, and I overheard one man say to another: "Jim, don't fire unless you're hit!"

We cleared the bush in front for the space of a few yards, and every man of the outpost was on the alert, with rifle loaded and lying perfectly still. Not a word was spoken, not a sound was made. Nothing was heard except the buzzing of mosquitoes. All eyes peered into the darkness; all ears were strained to catch the slightest sound that would tell us of the presence of the enemy. It is infinitely harder to bear the strain of such a watch and wait than it is to come into actual touch with your foe.

At midnight I heard some stealthy noises, which I felt assured were made by natives—the noises of crackling twigs in the brushwood and the thick bush. Even then, when it did not seem humanly possible to maintain silence, not a word was spoken; there was only an all-round nudge.

With dramatic abruptness there leapt into the cleared space, almost on top of us, half-a-dozen stalwart niggers.

One word was enough. "Fire!" and out rang every man's rifle, dropping the snipers, who were riddled with twenty bullets.

Instantly, like magic, the whole camp was roused, and in a few seconds every man was under arms; but there was no general attack. The biter had been bitten, for these niggers were not used to our small outposts, and were creeping right on top of the camp to fire and run. We left them where they had fallen.

At daybreak before we left camp our supply of water for the day was issued—a quart this time. We expected to attack the city about noon, but its exact position was not known, and we did not reach the place till nearly five o'clock. We still moved in Indian file, all of us, fired upon continually. The Maxims returned the fire, clearing the thick bush, as we advanced. It was a jumpy journey, and a man never knew when an unseen potter would bag him. One poor chap, Chief Petty Officer Ansell, of the *St. George*, was killed by a shot from a hidden nigger. In a few minutes he was buried, and we marched on, craving to be at the city. It was too harassing to feel that any moment the path on which one walked might be one's grave.

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One word was enough. "Fire!" and out rang every man's rifle.

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Now we saw abundant evidence of the ghastly and cruel work of the King. Lying across our path, so placed that the concealed niggers must have known exactly where we were marching, were the hideously mangled corpses of two human beings who had just been butchered; and alongside them were two goats with their throats cut. All had been offered as a sacrifice to the gods, the superstition of the natives being that we could not advance over the dead forms. That obstacle we easily overcame; but a stockade a little farther on was a tougher thing to deal with. It was necessary to clear it, and a demolition party blew up the stockade with a charge of gun-cotton, while we covered them with our rifle fire.

Shouting in the distance told us that we were very near the city, and this put new life into us, to say nothing of the hope that we should soon get something to drink. To the loud cries there was added a fiercer rifle fire, and it was clear that, if we entered Benin at all, we should not do so until we had fought and conquered.

Guided largely by the noises, we continued our advance, intensely excited at the certainty of a stirring brush with an enemy who was determined to fight. We knew that there must be only one result so far as we were concerned, and that was victory, for it was clear that we could not by any possibility allow ourselves to fall into the hands of a merciless foe.

The shells of our twelve-pounders and the twenty-four pounder war-rocket cleared the way, and we came out into a wide open road.

All at once we had a full view of the City of Blood. We saw the enemy everywhere—in the open spaces, and between the huts which formed their homes, while the large trees were full of them. They had many pieces of ordnance, and with these they blazed away at us. But the most dangerous and exasperating thing we had to face was the fusillade from the trees, the fire of the marksmen who could so easily see us and who were so difficult to detect.

The rattle of the Maxims, the volleys and independent firing of our rifles, the boom of the heavy guns, the hissing and screeching of the war-rockets, the frantic shouting of the niggers, and the wild cheering of our own men roused every combatant to frenzy.

The section of which I was in charge was commanded by Captain Byrne, and we formed the firing line. Only a very few minutes passed before Private Varndell was killed. I was blazing away at the bush, which swarmed with enemies. Captain Byrne was at my side giving directions.

Just as he was speaking to me he threw up his arms and fell to the ground, mortally wounded in the spine by, I think, a slug fired from a tree. Three privates were wounded, and the enemy was losing heavily.

A large piece of ordnance, which was lying on the ground, fired another round. Instantly Admiral Rawson gave the order: "Now, men, before they load again, charge!"

Bugler Allen sounded the "Charge!" and with one mighty yell—I cannot call it anything else—the marines, bluejackets, and Haussas rushed on and took the city. The enemy scattered in all directions, scurrying and scuttling away, and shinning down and dropping from the big trees as swiftly as the men dropped down with our bullets in them. They retreated with great speed, giving us a few parting shots as they disappeared.

By this time it was dusk, and a halt was ordered. We waited for the rear and flank guards to arrive with the killed and wounded. Amongst the dead who were brought in were Dr. Fyfe, of H.M.S. *St. George*, and Gunner Howlett, of the Royal Marine Artillery. Both had been killed in a tight corner while with the Royal Marine Artillery Maxim, which had done severe execution.

This result sounds easy enough, but we had had a running fight of fifteen hours to secure it, so that a rest was absolutely necessary. Everyone assembled in the compound—a big, open space in the city—tired, tortured by thirst, but triumphant, and all eager to see with their own eyes the place about which so many dreadful stories had been told.

And when the day had fully come and we could look round, we saw that no story, however terrible, had exaggerated the horrors of that awful place.

Benin literally reeked with blood, and on every side gave evidence of cruelty and massacre. Human sacrifices had been offered lavishly. On the trees were human beings who had been crucified—men, women, and children, whose limbs had been stretched out and fastened to the trunks and branches with bindings of thorns, and who had been left to perish of hunger, thirst, and pain.

The Valley of Skulls—as one long valley was called—contained thousands of human skulls and bones. Bodies in various stages of decomposition were lashed to poles, showing the monstrous and revolting work which had been carried on for years. In the King's Palaver House were hundreds of tusks

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With one mighty yell . . . marines, bluejackets, and Haussas rushed on and took the city.

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of ivory, beautifully carved, and anointed with human blood. Two great, silvered knives, which had been used for executions, were found, and to our amazement we saw that they bore the name of a famous firm of English cutlers. The weapons must have been secretly secured for the King by foreign traders, like many other things in the city, such as gin and corrugated iron and the State umbrellas. There were great numbers of wicker-covered jars of gin—two-gallon jars they were—and we also came across forty large kegs of gunpowder.

The very smell of the place was sickening and unendurable. While the graves of our dead were being dug, I went out with a small reconnoitring party. We found a deep, dry well, partly filled with dead bodies. From its awful depths we heard a cry, clearly a pitiful appeal for help. A rope was obtained, and Private Shore descended and rescued two poor slaves whose legs were manacled with irons. They were taken before the Admiral, and, of course, released. We learnt that they were porters belonging to the peaceful mission which had been massacred.

Cattle, goats, ducks, and chickens were plentiful; but we craved mostly for water, our last drop having been issued, and an escort was dispatched to get some from a stream about a mile and a half away. As soon as the clear running water was sighted escort and coolies alike rushed into it and drank like cattle. Those who have not known the scarcity of water or the agony of thirst can never realise the suffering we endured while the fight lasted and until we found the river.

It was evident from the great quantities of things we came across that the enemy believed that we should never take the city. We found it just as they had themselves used and lived in it. Each house had a number of poisoned arrows, and the way of poisoning them was too terribly obvious, for the arrows had brass tips, and these were all stuck into decomposed human flesh.

I found myself on the 20th living in the priests' house, but there was not much time to study the holy black men's ways, for next day the city burst into flames through some careless coolies making fires. It was a thrilling, anxious time, but luckily all the wounded were rescued, and there were no casualties.

In its way Benin was a wonderful city. Surrounded by dense forests, there were plenty of products in the way of palm oil and rubber. The natives dressed in white linen and coloured cloths, the material being merely wrapped round them. They had a very great craving for European goods, and a passion for such personal adornments as gold lace and large hats; also umbrellas of tremendous size.

The natives lived in large houses constructed of timber, red clay, and corrugated iron. They were particularly well supplied with fire-arms, cartridges, and gunpowder. A peculiarity of the tribe was that it was the only one in that region which carried on the practice of human sacrifice, a practice which was fostered very largely by the terrible fetish-men.

It was impossible for white troops to remain, and we prepared to leave Benin and get to the coast, after handing the city over to the local troops of the Niger Coast Protectorate. On the 22nd we hoisted and saluted the Union Jack, and gladly bade farewell to the City of Blood. Next day we reached Cross Roads and were enthusiastically welcomed by our comrades, who had made a fine defensive post. We now all joined up and marched to the coast, carrying Captain Byrne with us. He lived long enough to see England, but there was never any hope for him. One sad incident shows how precarious is the tenure of the life of a man on active service. On reaching the coast we embarked in the small river steamer *Eko*. Private Heath, of the Royal Marine Light Infantry, who was attached to the 1st Section, had been all through the expedition and escaped everything, and it seemed certain that he would return home safely. We were all asleep on the upper deck when we were startled and awakened by the shouts of the look-out, who reported: "White man go down—no come up."

On mustering it was found that Heath was missing. He had got up and stepped overboard in his sleep, and we found no trace whatever of him.

No mercy was shown to the King and the chiefs who had been so merciless themselves. The King escaped, but was captured and deposed. The fetish-houses and crucifixion-trees were destroyed. There were half-a-dozen chiefs to begin with, but not one was left at the finish. Two—they were ring-leaders—were executed; two more saved a lot of trouble by destroying themselves; one had already died. The real fiend of the performance—the fetish-man who was called Ologosherri—escaped into the bush and collected a fighting force with which he did a good deal of mischief, but in the end he was caught and put to death.

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His Kingdom

The Story of How he Won it.

By Frank St. Austell.

Father has often told me how like mother my sister Mercy is. Mother is dead. She died just after father lost all his money in the gold-mines, and we left our dear home and came to live in Little Pethwick. All our nice furniture, and the horses, and Mercy's own mare, Violette, were sold when we took Myrtle Villa. But father kept the piano. He knew how Mercy would feel parting with it, and, besides, it was mother's.

I left school last Christmas because I am fifteen, and now we are poor, father cannot afford to keep me there any longer. He was very sorry to let me leave, but I said I could not be happy there now things were altered, and that I wanted to help Mercy look after him. Father smiled a sad little smile when I said this, but he let me have my way.

So I came home to Myrtle Villa, and Mercy and father, and felt very happy, although I did not like to see poor father work so hard. He writes the music for songs, but the publishers do not pay him very well, and sometimes he does not sell anything for ever so long.

I was sorry for Mercy, too. You see, it is different for me, because I am only a little girl, and not "out." But Mercy is twenty-one, and when mother was alive, and we were well off, she went to dances and theatres, and Captain Wristonhaugh used to take her and me for drives in his motor.

"Oh, Mercy, darling," I said one day, "don't you feel dreadfully dull with no one but your little sister to talk to?"

"I find my little sister quite enough, Val, dearest," she answered, smiling gently (my name is Valérie), "and, besides, we both have father."

Still, I began to notice a sad, wistful look on Mercy's face, although she never complained, and once when the butcher was so rude about his bill, because father hadn't sold any music for several months, and it was a long time overdue, I saw her eyes were red as though she had been crying. She was very quiet that evening, and when she was playing Tchaikowsky's "Chanson Triste" very softly I thought I heard a sob.

But father came into the little drawing-room just then, and asked her to sing to him.

"What shall I sing, daddy man?" she asked gaily. Mercy is always cheerful when father is with us.

"Sing 'In Vain,' dear," he answered, stroking her soft chestnut hair, for she was kneeling beside him on the floor.

"But that's such a sad song—it will make you feel sorry, daddy man," she said—Mercy always calls father "daddy man."

"Never mind, little girl," he replied. "I like that song when I am tired and things won't go right. And"—he said more slowly, and as if he had forgotten us for a moment—"mother used to sing it."

So Mercy went to the piano, and began to play the opening bars of the song.

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The words are like this:

The night-wind moans through a tangle of bramble bushes;
The withering sedge looms gaunt through a mist of rain;
What wail of the river, the river that wakes the rushes—
In vain! in vain!

O Night! give place to panting, passionate morrow,
O herald the Dawn on valley and hill and plain!
Yet why? she brings but sorrow and sorrow and sorrow—
In vain! in vain!

Oh clasp me close, sweet heart, and thy caresses
Shall winnow away the chaff of a world of pain;
Within thine arms, life's burden upon me presses
In vain! in vain!

I think Mercy was crying when she had finished, because her last note was not quite true, and she played the last few bars over again before she spoke. Father was looking into the fire, and I knew his thoughts were far away.

When Mercy was singing I seemed to hear the wind moan, and see the cold, wet rushes. But it was the last verse that made the tears come into my eyes, for I remembered the time when Captain Wristonhaugh used to take Mercy and me out in his motor, and we were happy.

After a little while we had supper, and father cheered us up, and told us funny stories until we went to bed. He was so merry, although I am afraid he did not really feel very happy. But he cannot bear to see his "little birds," as he calls Mercy and me, sorrowful.

Some days after this Mercy was to sing at a concert in the village schoolroom. Mrs. Proser, the Vicar's wife, had called and asked her if she would sing at the annual Band of Hope entertainment, and Mercy promised.

"There will be quite a distinguished gathering," said Mrs. Proser importantly. "Lord Chessington and his mother have announced their intention of being present. They told the Vicar so when he dined with them last Tuesday evening."

I do not like Mrs. Proser, although she is very worthy. I am sure she said this because she wanted us to know that the Vicar sometimes dines with the Countess of Stiffenstarch and Lord Chessington.

I went with Mercy and father to the concert. The Vicar shook hands with us, and patted me on the head, which made me very angry. Mercy wore her white frock and a little string of small pearls round her throat. She looked very sweet and good, and made me feel as if I wanted to be good like her.

There was a duet by the Vicar's two daughters, and a violin solo, and "Tom Bowling," sung by a gentleman with a tenor voice. Then Mercy sang. She was a little nervous, but I do not think I have ever heard her sing so well before.

Lord Chessington was astonished. He looked up as soon as he saw Mercy go on to the platform, and when she began singing he never took his eyes off her till she had finished. She sang "The Banks of Allan Water," and the people clapped her tremendously, and wanted an encore, but the Vicar did not ask her to give one because his daughters had not been encored.

There were some more songs, and then an interval, when the Countess of Stiffenstarch gave away the prizes to the Band of Hope children. Then the second part of the concert came on. Mercy sang again. She sang "Cherry Ripe," and Lord Chessington simply drank in every note. They made her give an encore this time, and she chose a little song that mother used to sing. It is called "The Kingdom of My Heart," and these are the words:

Since I am bound by chains of love
And fettered with a kiss,
Thy willing captive but to prove
My pride and glory is;
Though all the world thy kingdom be
To its remotest part,
I care not, so thou rule for me
The kingdom of my heart.

And thou alone shalt wear its crown,
And it shall own thy sway
When mighty empires totter down
To moulder in decay;
For thee alone its palace gates
Shall thunder wide apart,
Dear sovereign, whose law awaits
The kingdom of my heart.

I always feel I should like to sing this song to the man I really and truly loved.

There was a great deal of clapping when Mercy had finished singing, and the Countess of Stiffenstarch, who is a dear old lady, touched Mrs. Proser on the shoulder and asked her to introduce Mercy.

"I liked your songs very much, dear," she said, "and if you would come and sing to a lonely old woman sometimes I should be very grateful. This is my son," she went on, turning to Lord Chessington.

"Your singing is perfectly charming, Miss Cottesford," he exclaimed enthusiastically. "I hope you will come and sing to my mother before I rejoin my regiment."

Then Mercy introduced father and me, and the Countess said such nice things to both of

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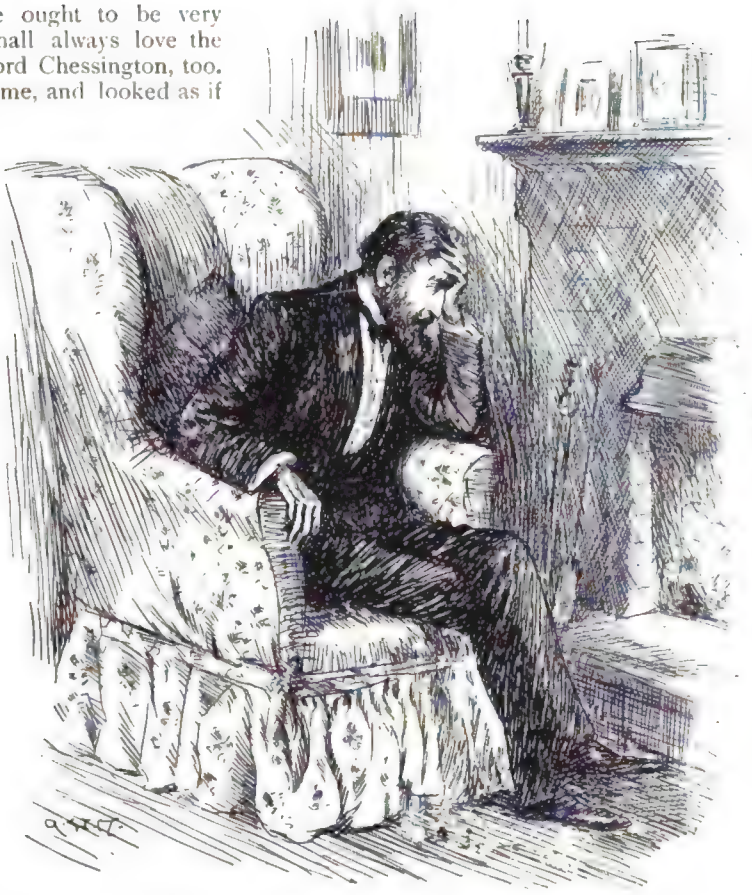
us, and told father he ought to be very proud of Mercy. I shall always love the Countess, but I liked Lord Chessington, too. He was tall, and handsome, and looked as if he could do things.

"I am very proud of my little girl to-night," father said when we got home, "and I know mother would have been proud of her, too."

"I'm so glad, daddy man," she said, kissing him good-night.

Two or three days afterwards, Lord Chessington called. He brought a note from his mother, who had a cold and was obliged to stay indoors, asking Mercy and me to come and have tea with her, and hoping Mercy would bring some songs. Lord Chessington said he hoped so, too, and stayed quite a long time talking to Mercy about books and music. He talked to me, too, and when I admired his horse—he had ridden over from Chessington Park—he promised to show me the stables the next day when we went there to tea. He also insisted on motoring over to fetch us, because the Park is three miles away.



Father was looking into the fire, and I knew his thoughts were far away.

When he had gone, I said to Mercy: "What a nice man he is! If I had a brother I should like him to be like Lord Chessington!"

"Would you, Val, dear?" replied Mercy smiling, but I thought I heard her sigh, and she went away rather quickly to tell Dora something. Dora is our servant.

Lord Chessington arrived with the motor at about half-past two the next day. It was a lovely car, and we seemed to reach Chessington Park in a few minutes. The Countess was waiting for us in the drawing-room, a lovely old room, and she seemed to be in keeping with it just as the furniture and pictures and old china were.

Mercy sang several songs, and then we had tea, and Lord Chessington showed me the horses and the gardens, but Mercy said she would rather stay and talk to the Countess.

He asked me lots of questions, and I told him how we used to be rich, and how father lost all his money, and Mercy's mare had to be sold, and we were obliged to live in Myrtle Villa.

He was very sorry when he heard this, and said "poor little girl" under his breath two or three times. He drove us back himself in the motor, and said to Mercy as we parted at the front door:

"Thank you a great deal for coming, Miss Cottesford; I don't know when I have enjoyed an afternoon so much."

Then he shook hands, and was gone almost before we had time to reply.

We went in and told father all that we had done, and I said what a dear lady the Countess was, and how I liked Lord Chessington.

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"I am going away, Val," he said.

"And what does Mercy say?" he asked with a smile, for Mercy had been quite silent.

"I like them both very much, too," she said slowly, and then went away to take off her hat.

After this we saw a great deal of Lord Chessington and his mother. He was always coming with books for Mercy or chocolates for me, or a note from the Countess inviting us to the Park. He talked a lot with father, too, and told him of a friend of his who was a music publisher, and this friend bought a lot of song-music from father. He taught me to ride, and we all three used to go out riding together.

Mercy began to look so happy now, although at times she was very thoughtful, and father was delighted.

"My little girl is like a sunbeam about the house," he said, smiling and pinching her cheek.

But after we had known him about a month I met Lord Chessington one day when I was going to fetch eggs from old Mrs. Giles at the farm, and he looked very sad.

"Dear Lord Chessington!" I cried, "is anything the matter?"

"I am going away, Val," he said, turning and walking beside me. "My leave is up, and I must rejoin my regiment."

"I am so sorry," I said, for he had been very kind to us, "and I am sure your mother is."

"Yes," he replied slowly, "she is sorry. Do you think your sister will be sorry, too, Val?"

"Of course she will," I answered. "We shall miss you very much."

"I was coming to say good-bye," he went on. "Let me walk with you to fetch the eggs, and we will go back to the village together."

We found Mercy playing the piano. Father had gone to London, and she and I were alone.

"I have come to say good-bye, Miss Cottesford," said Lord Chessington when we had all sat down. "I rejoin the regiment to-morrow."

"To-morrow!" said Mercy quickly and in a surprised tone. Then she added quietly: "I am very sorry you are going, and so is Val, I am sure. We shall miss you a great deal."

"Will you really, Miss Cottesford?" he said, looking steadily at her.

Mercy flushed a little and turned her head away. We were silent for a moment.

Then Lord Chessington walked across the room to the music-stand. He paused a minute and said:

"Please sing to me once more before I go. May I choose my own song?" And then, as Mercy hesitated, he picked out a piece of music and set it on the piano.

"It is the last time for many a day," he said pleadingly.

I looked at the song he had chosen; it was the one Mercy had sung at the concert—"The Kingdom of my Heart."

She played over the symphony, and then began to sing very softly. I looked at Lord Chessington, but he did not notice me. His eyes were fixed on Mercy. She seemed to

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have forgotten that he was there, but she sang as I had never heard her sing before.

She was singing softly all through the first verse. But when she came to the second she seemed to be full of triumph, and her lovely voice rang out, and every note came clearer than silver bells.

> And thou alone shalt wear its crown,
> And it shall own thy sway,
> When mighty empires totter down
> To moulder in decay;
> For thee alone its palace gates
> Shall thunder wide apart,
> Dear sovereign, whose rule awaits
> The kingdom of my heart.

The last two lines were sung very softly, and I saw a tear on Mercy's cheek. Lord Chessington saw it, too. He strode across our little drawing-room and took her gently in his arms.

"If I might only wear your heart's crown, my darling," he said very tenderly, "I would never want any other. Do you think I may?"

And before I could get out of the room I saw Mercy smile up through the tears, and heard her whisper "Yes."

Father did not say a great deal when he came home, and Lord Chessington told him his "good news" as he called it. But he looked at Mercy, and smiled very lovingly when he saw her radiant face. We all had tea together and were very merry and happy till Lord Chessington said he must go home and "tell his mother that he was bringing her a dear daughter"—that is how he put it.

Mercy walked with him to the gate when he went away, and father was silent, and seemed to be thinking till she came back.

She went straight up to him as he sat in his arm-chair and kissed him, and made me come and be kissed, too.

Then father took me on his knee as he used to when I was a little girl, and Mercy leaned on the back of his chair with her arm round his neck.

"And are you really glad, girlie?" asked father at last.

"So glad, daddy man," Mercy answered.

"And Val?" he said.

"Yes, father, I am very glad, too," I exclaimed.

* * * * *

So it turned out after all that I had Arthur—that is Lord Chessington's name—for a brother, and I am going to be Mercy's chief bridesmaid.

THE STAIRS.

To me there's no such solemn sight
Amid this world of grief and cares
As just an ordinary flight
Of stairs.

What feet have trod each well-worn step!
The cheerful young, whose health is rude,
The aged, sunken in decrep-
Itude.

There tripped some maid of aspect sweet
Arrayed for Fashion's giddy whirl;
There tramped a youth who went to meet
His girl.

Oh! pause to glance where Jack and Sal
On hard, hard boards their penance made
For gaily sliding down the bal-
Ustrade.

Come, friend! They show a side that's bright
And eke a side that's blank with woe,
But, since the stairs are in a flight,
Let's go.

F. E. B.

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DISTRAINT FOR RENT

A Comedy in One Act.

By Geoffrey Besant.

(This little play is eminently suitable for Amateur Theatricals. All those wishing to perform it must apply for permission to the Editor of The Royal Magazine, *18 Henrietta Street, London W.C.)*

Characters:

Joseph Farmiloe.
Theodore Henslie ("Tessie"), his nephew.
George Tollett, the landlord.
Bill Muggins, a broker's man.
Winnie Henslie, Tessie's wife.
Mrs. Wilks, a charwoman.

Scene: *Henslie's studio.* Period: *To-day.*

Scene: *A decently-furnished studio; doors,* L. *to staircase and out, and,* R., *to bedroom; back,* R., *a screen;* C., *top lights, and ordinary north light, the window open at bottom.* Winnie Henslie *is having breakfast; it is about ten o'clock.* Henslie, *known as* "Tessie," *is dressing.*

Winnie (*calling*). Tessie! (*Aside.*) He *is* a lazy boy! (*Aloud.*) Tessie!

Tessie (*off*). Sir—madam, I mean!

Winn. There are a lot of letters for you, darling. Do hurry up—the eggs are getting cold.

Tess. (*off*). Right oh! I won't be long. What are the letters like? Bills?

Winn. Of course, darling. What else do you expect? (*Looking at letters.*)

Tess. (*off*). Cheques — commissions—royal commands!

Winn. (*aside—laughing*). Do you?

(*Enter* Tessie—*he kisses* Winnie *and sits down opposite her —opens first bill—grunts.*)

Tess. Impudent fellows these tradesmen. They actually expect to be paid. Seventeen and four for beef and mutton. What has Art to do with seventeen and four? Dross!

Winn. Of course, darling. What else do you expect? (*Looking at letters.*)

Winn. Unfortunately Art has a prodigious appetite sometimes, and food costs—what do you call it?

Tess. Dross. Filthy lucre—trash—gold. Pah! I despise it. Art treads it beneath her feet. (*Looking up suddenly very cheerfully.*) And if I have the deuce of a twist, what about it? I can't help it.

Winn. No, darling; of course you can't. I love your twist. But it wants a lot of satisfying; and you are so lazy, you know. Look at that pile of bills in front of you, six of them, all wanting to be paid at once, including the rent—there's a letter from the landlord.

Tess. Rent—rent—where is it? The letter, I mean, not the money; as if there were any difficulty about that—ha-ha. (*Reads letter.*) H'm—h'm—

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immediate payment. (*Aloud.*) What a nice, gentlemanly fellow the landlord is! He threatens to distrain.

WINN. What does that mean?

TESS. It means that he puts in a man to see we don't cart off the furniture. You see the landlord can distrain—have a claim—on our furniture if the rent is not paid by a certain time. I could use the fellow as a model.

WINN. What is a broker's man like to look at?

TESS. A broker's man generally looks like a plumber out of a job. He sits in the kitchen, smokes a clay pipe, and drinks beer. The main thing is to keep him out.

WINN. Of course, dear, we must keep him out. But suppose he climbs in through the window?

TESS. Well, then he's in, and it can't be helped. The broker's man frequently disguises himself.

WINN. As what?

TESS. Oh—all sorts of things. Insurance agent, gas man, Nonconformist parson, and so on. But seriously, Winnie darling, we seem to be in a nasty hole this time.

WINN. Never mind, dear, we must try to sell some of the pictures.

TESS. Try to sell some of the pictures! That's what I've been doing ever since I painted them. However, we'll make a special effort. Where is that portfolio of French sketches? Oh—here it is—now let's see what's worth taking round. (*They look through portfolio together.*) Beautiful works, aren't they, Winnie? The public doesn't know what a good thing it is in for. Well, which is calculated to tickle the picture-buyer's palate, and make him, like Oliver Twist, ask for more?

WINN. (*choosing sketches*). That one—and the sunset on the river one—ah—that's nice—that—and those three. Oh, Tessie dear, these ought to be enough, at any rate, to pay the rent.

TESS. (*dismally*). I couldn't honestly say that these little sketches exactly revolutionise water-colour painting in this country.

WINN. I think they're sweet.

TESS. (*enthusiastically*). Do you, darling? Then we'll keep 'em, and hang the rent!

TESS. (*at door*, L.). They can't resist you. I'll do my best with these sketches.

WINN. You dear boy! No, no, they must go. How much is the rent, exactly?

TESS. Sixteen pounds five shillings. I doubt whether I should get that for these sketches. They are so unfinished. Besides, there are a dozen other bills equally pressing.

WINN. Never mind the other bills, dear. Let's try to pay some of the rent. Isn't there anything else? Why, yes—Tessie, why don't you sell this portrait of me in the sunbonnet? You say it's what people like. (*Reaches picture from wall.*)

TESS. No, hang it, no. That's the best thing I've ever done, and it's you, Winnie. We'll keep that, even if we *are* starving.

WINN. Why, you dear, foolish boy, you have me always with you. You can easily do another one.

TESS. But not so good as that. (*Replaces picture.*) It's awfully rough on you, little girl. I ought never to have asked you to marry me; a poor artist is no good as a husband for a nice girl.

WINN. Don't be absurd, Tessie. We couldn't help getting married; and we're always so happy, aren't we? Though we are so poor.

TESS. (*kissing her*). You're a duck, Winn, far too good for me.

WINN. (*giving him his hat, stick, and the portfolio*). There, no more kisses; run away and make some money, while I interview the butcher, and the baker, and the candle-stickmaker, and try to get them to wait a little.

TESS. (*at door*, L.). They can't resist you. I'll do my best with these sketches. (*Puts his hand on picture of Winn.*) No, I won't. I'd starve first. Good-bye, Winn. (*Exit*, L.)

WINN. (*alone*). Poor Tessie! It *is* horrid we're so poor; and he really paints beautifully. Why hasn't he got nice rich relations—a prosperous Australian uncle, or someone like that; anyhow, a rich patron who would come in and buy all the pictures. (*Looks at portrait.*) It's all your fault; you horrid, smiling girl. You can do nothing except wear pretty frocks and smile. Tessie was much better off before you married him. (*Turns away, puts on hat, etc. Ruefully.*) Now I've got to fight the tradesmen! (*Calls.*) Mrs. Wilks!

(*Enter* MRS. WILKS. R.)

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WINN. I'm going out for a little—to the butcher's. I shan't be long. Have you finished the bedroom?

MRS. WILKS. Yes, m'm, just.

WINN. Very well, you needn't wait for me. (*Exit.*)

MRS. WILKS (*alone; clearing the breakfast away*). Pore things—they don't seem to have much money. Strikes me painting ain't much of a trade, wotever it is; pictures like that 'ere (*indicating portrait*), or railings and lamp-posts, like my 'usband did. (*Goes,* R. *Knock,* L.) Law, there's another tradesman's bill; want the money, too, I'll be bound. (*Opens door,* L.) Now then; what do you want? Oh — beg pardon, sir; I thought it was the milkman.

(*Enter* FARMILOE.)

FARM. Is Mr. Theodore Henslie in?

MRS. WILKS. No, sir, master's out, and missus is out, and I'm just going myself.

FARM. (*aside*). Oho! There's a *Mrs.* Theodore, is there? (*Aloud.*) Well, I'll wait a little. (*Looks round studio.*) H'm—pretty studio. (*Crosses to portrait.*) What a charming face! My nephew has good taste. Here, my good woman, do you know who this is? (*Indicating portrait.*)

MRS. WILKS. That's the missus, sir. Master's very proud of it; 'e says 'e wouldn't part with it for anything in the world you could give 'im.

FARM. (*Aloud.*) I suppose Mrs. Henslie won't be very long?

FARM. Ah—wouldn't he? Well, I won't keep you, if you want to be off. I'll wait here. (*Sits.*)

MRS. WILKS. That's all right, sir. But I don't know as I ought to leave you here. You might go off with something; not that there's much to take; and the landlord 'll 'ave most of the things.

FARM. How's that?

MRS. WILKS. Rent overdoo, and a lot of bills to be paid. I 'eard Mr. Tollet, that's the landlord, sir, say 'e'd put in the brokers if the rent weren't paid to-day.

FARM. (*aside*). That's too bad. (*Aloud.*) I suppose Mrs. Henslie won't be very long?

MRS. WILKS. No, sir—the missus 'as gone to the butcher's. There's always tradespeople 'anging around after money 'ere, sir. Master and missus, pore things, is that in love with each other that they don't seem to get any money—but they allus pays me reg'lar.

FARM. Well, my good woman, I'm much obliged to you for the information. Here's half-a-sovereign for you.

MRS. WILKS. Thank you kindly, sir. I'll go now. I don't think the missus 'll be long. Good-morning, sir.

FARM. Good-morning!

(*Exit* MRS. WILKS, L.)

FARM. So the rent's due, brokers are threatened, and there are a lot of bills. Yes—here they are! Notice of rent—butcher—baker—laundry—tailor—dressmaker—tut, tut! It's not exactly playing the game to look at another man's correspondence; but I suspect I shall have to settle these bills. The young scamp's married, too, on next to nothing a year. Well, by George, he's like his old uncle, a chip of the old block. (*Looks at picture.*) Yes, she's a pretty girl. I don't blame the boy. The broker's coming in? Well, well, it's a shame! (*Frowns—then his face lights up suddenly.*) Why shouldn't I have a bit of a joke on them? *I'll* be the broker's man. Let me see—these clothes won't do. (*He looks round.*) Ha—an old coat of the boy's. So—I'll turn down the brim of my hat—this handkerchief round my neck. (*Looks at feet.*) H'm, boots give the show away—that can't be helped, though. Now to hide my other things behind the screen. (*Exit behind screen* R.)

(*A ladder appears through window,* C., *the head of* MUGGINS *looks in. Window pushed up.*)

MUGG. Beg pardon, mum—I'm the plumber, come to see the drains is all right——'ullo! no one 'ere. (*Gets in.*) Got in easy that time. Not much ter look after.

(*Enter* FARM. *from screen.*)

FARM. (*aside*). The real broker's man! Whew, the plot thickens. I must get rid of the fellow somehow—well, here goes! (*Aloud.*) Nah, then, ole feller—wot's yer gime 'ere? Looks like a bit o' burglin'! If yer think yer goin' ter crack a nice little crib 'ere, yer darn well mistaken. Aht yer go—I'm in charge.

MUGG. You're in chawge? Go 'ome! *I'm* in chawge—distraint o' rent, sixteen pahnd five, doo to Mr. Tollet, the landlord.

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FARM. Oh, that's it, is it? Well, Mr. Tollet employed me fer this job, so you kin 'ook it.

MUGG. 'Ook it! Not me. I'm 'ere, an' I don't move.

(*Pause.*)

FARM. 'Ere, matey, what's Tollet's gime, sendin' two of us for a little job like this 'ere?

MUGG. Blime if I know. I wonder where the beer is. (*He searches in cupboard.*)

FARM. No beer! Lor—this is a 'ahsold! You're a nice-spoken young feller. I'll stand a quart o' burton an' bitter if you'll get it. (*Produces the money.*)

MUGG. Ah—I noo you was one of the right sort. I'll off an' get the beer. A quart, did you s'y?

FARM. Yus—a quart.

MUGG. (*looking at coin in his hand*). This 'ere 'll git two quarts—thirsty job this, matey.

FARM. Two quarts—that's a 'arf gallon, ain't it?

MUGG. Wot oh! it *is* a 'arf gallon—'ere's the distraint paper, matey; just you see to the sticks while I'm gone. (*Exit* L.)

FARM. (*alone*). It *is* lucky I turned up to-day. (*Goes to picture.*) She *is* a pretty girl!

(*Enter* WINNIE L.)

WINN. Good gracious! Who are you? What do you want?

FARM. (*quickly glancing from picture to* WINN., *aside*). My niece, I suppose. (*Aloud.*) Distraint o' rent, m'm, for Mr. Tollet. 'Ere's the notice. (*Hands paper.*)

WINN. What do you mean? Are you—are you—the broker's man?

FARM. Broker's man, m'm, that's me, an' a nice, quiet trade it is, too. You might not think it, m'm, but we sees a lot o' 'igh life in our business. You've got some nice sticks of furniture 'ere. (*Strolls round studio easily.*)

FARM. Distraint o'rent, m'm, for Mr. To let. 'Ere's the notice. (*Hands paper.*)

WINN. (*aside*). Oh, Good Heavens! what am I to do? And Tessie may not be back for ever so long! (*Aloud.*) You needn't stay in here, need you? There's the wash-house down below.

MUGG. Beg pardon, mum—I'm the plumber, come to see the drains is all right.

FARM. (*winking broadly*). Yus, mum, there *is* the washus below—an' wot a silly elf I'd look a-sitting in the washus wiv you a-'eavin' the tables an' the chairs aht o' the winder an' a-cartin' 'em off to Jerusalem. Wot oh! I stays 'ere.

WINN. (*aside*). He's worse and worse—what am I to do?

FARM. (*sitting down amiably*). Rent's a matter o' sixteen pahnd five, ain't it, m'm?

WINN. Yes.

FARM. Ah! (*Lights a clay pipe.*) There's that much value o' stuff 'ere—why, I'd give sixteen pahnd five for that portrait of you, m'm.

WINN. (*gasping*). Would you?

FARM. Yus, m'm, I would; it's wurf it, it is; a nice bit o' paintin'. I'm a' artis' myself—on the pavement. But portraits ain't no good in my business—a nice bit o' coocumber an' a lobster in red chalk, wiv "Gawd sive the King" underneath in blue—that fetches in the coppers like winkin'! But 'e's a good painter, yer 'usband is.

(*Enter* TOLLET *and* MUGGINS *with beer.*)

TOLL. (*angrily to* FARM.). Now then, my man, what's all this? Beg pardon, Mrs. Henslie, I've had to put a distraint on your furniture for the rent, six weeks overdue.

WINN. Yes, this is the broker's man, isn't he? (*indicating* FARM.)

TOLL. No, he's nothing of the sort. Muggins, put that beer down.

FARM. (*roars with laughter*). 'E's put 'arf of it dahn orready, ain't yer?

MUGG. (*at beer*). Wot oh!

TOLL. Now then, you fellow (*to* FARM.), what's your business here? Out you go!

FARM. I'm a friend of the family, ain't I, m'm?

WINN. Er—I don't know—I suppose so.

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FARM. There you are! That's a nice sort o' feller you've got for a broker's man, Mr. Landlord.

TOLL. Now, Muggins, see that none of the furniture is moved, do you hear?

MUGG. Yus, guv'nor. (*Relapses into beer.*)

WINN. Look here, Mr. Tollet, you've got no right to send a drunken man like that here.

FARM. Quite right, mum. 'Ooray for principles! 'Ere, Tollet, you take yer ugly self an' yer drunken friend orf, d'ye 'ear? The lady is an ole pal o' mine.

TOLL. Muggins stays here till the rent's paid.

FARM. (*whistles*). 'Ere, Tollet, 'ow much is the bloomin' rent?

TOLL. What's that to you? Sixteen pounds five.

FARM. (*producing notes and gold*). 'Ere's the little lot—you can drink the change. D'yer 'ear, Muggins—more beer.

MUGG. (*waving can*). 'Ooray!

FARM. Make note, the rent's paid, m'm.

TOLL. Very good. I don't know who you are. You must thank this man for your rent, madam. I will send the receipt over. Come along, Muggins. (*Pulls* MUGG. *and beer off* L.)

(*Exeunt* TOLLET *and* MUGGINS L.)

WINN. (*astonished*). You've paid the rent? I don't understand—aren't you the broker's man?

FARM. Lor' no, m'm. When'll yer 'usband be in?

WINN. I don't know—he may be back any minute, or he may be a long time.

FARM. That's all right, m'm. I'll wait a bit, if you don't mind. Yer 'usband don't paint wot pays, do 'e? Well, I think 'e's right. It ain't the money what counts, it's the art—that's the thing, ain't it, m'm?

WINN. So my husband says; but we must have money, too. His relations turned against him because he married me.

FARM. Yer 'usband's relations didn't know a good thing, m'm. But wot was wrong with you?

WINN. I had no money. My father was in the merchant service and was drowned at sea. I was very wrong to marry Tessie; but I loved him and he loved me, and—and—— (*Cries.*)

FARM. Don't mind cryin' in front of me, m'm. I'm used ter sorrow. I've 'ad a bit o' it myself. (*They both cry.*)

(*Enter* TESSIE.)

TESS. What on earth——?

WINN. (*running to him*). Tessie, the landlord put the broker in—a horrid man, with a can of beer—and this gentleman paid the rent.

TESS. That's—that's awfully good of you, sir.

FARM. That's orl right, mister. I was passin' and I looked in like, an' found a feller in possession. So I paid the rent.

TESS. (*warmly*). I'm most indebted to you, sir; you must let me pay you back.

FARM. 'Ave you sold any of your stuff to the agents, mister?

TESS. No, I haven't.

WINN. Oh, Tessie, darling, wouldn't they buy them?

TESS. No good at all, so they said. Look here, sir, you must take one of my pictures in exchange for the money, or at any rate until I can raise some.

FARM. Thank 'ee. I'll look round. (*Strolls all round the studio looking at the various things on the walls. The others watch him anxiously.*) Nah, that's wot I'll take, if I may 'ave it. (*Pointing to* WINNIE'S *picture.*) That is if you really want to pay me back. I'll take that 'un wiv me.

TESS. No, no, not that one; anything else!

WINN. Let him have it, darling—he has really pulled us out of a nasty hole.

TESS. Well, sir, I particularly do not want to part with that little sketch of my wife. Isn't there some other you would prefer to have?

FARM. No, mister, this is the little lot for me. Nah I'll be goin'. Me things is in 'ere. (*Exit behind screen.*)

(TESSIE, *with a gesture of despair to* WINNIE, *takes down the portrait.*)

FARM. (*in his own clothes—natural voice*). Well, nephew, a pleasant surprise, eh?

TESS. Uncle Joseph!

FARM. Yes, Uncle Joseph, the wanderer, returned in the nick of time, too. But I must kiss my niece first. (*Kisses* WINNIE.) Tessie, my boy, you've got a wife a good deal too good for you.

TESS. (*warmly*). I have, indeed, sir.

WINN. (*seizing* FARM.'S *hands*). Uncle Joseph, please, please, don't take away that portrait of me. Tessie does love it so. He shall do you another one, much, much better.

FARM. Well, I'd set my heart on this one, you know, but since you want it so very much, I'll take your bills instead and pay them, eh, Winnie? (*Pinches her cheek.*) And now let's all go to lunch together.

WINN. You're a dear uncle, and if all broker's men are as sweet—we'll never, *never* pay the rent!

CURTAIN.

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CAP AND BELLS

ROUGH ON THE RECTOR.

A retired naval chaplain became rector of a country parish

On one occasion his parishioners, wishing to give him a surprise, bought a flag for the church tower. When the rector saw it hoisted on the tower he at once ordered it to be taken down. On being asked his reason for doing so, he indignantly answered:

"Allow that flag to fly over my church—never. Do you know what that particular flag signifies? 'In distress—want a pilot.'"

* * * * *

WORKING FOR A LIVING.

A certain small boy got into the habit of teasing his mother for pennies, until at last she said to him:

"Now, Willie, I don't like to give you pennies. If you want money, you should go to work and earn it."

The boy remained thoughtful for some time. Then, within a few days, the mother perceived that Willie had plenty of pennies. She wondered a little where he got them, but did not question him.

One summer day she noticed that some sort of a hullabaloo was going on in the back yard. Looking out she saw Willie surrounded by a mob of boys, who were yelling with delight. She went down into the yard to see what was going on, and as she passed out she saw, stuck up on the back wall of the house, this notice, quite neatly "printed" out with a pencil:

WILLIE JONES WILL EAT:

One small worm for	½d.
One large worm for	1d.
One small caterpillar for	1½d.
One large caterpillar for	2d.
One small green toad for	6d

And Willie was apparently doing a thriving business.

THE OLD SWEET WAY.

THE DUCHESS (who takes a great interest in all her servants and has a large house-party): "Oh, so you're the new scullery-maid. I hope you like your place?"

NEW SCULLERY-MAID: "No, my lady. I want to leave next week. I can't stand these late dinners. All the ladies as I've ever been connected with have just took a bit of something in their 'ands, and there wasn't all this washing up."

* * * * *

AND SO THE STORY RUNS.

HE (reading): "'And the plot thickens. Beautiful Alverta creeps in, spreads her stationery over the table, writes a letter, and gets up and folds the table.'"

SHE: "Absurd. You mean she folds the letter."

HE: "Nothing of the kind. This was a folding table."

* * * * *

HE DID.

THE GOOD MAN: "Do you know where little boys go that throw stones at birds?"

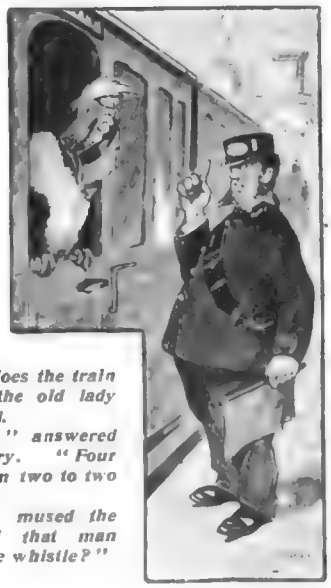
THE BAD BOY: "Rather. They goes where there is birds. Didn't think they went down in a well, did yer?"

* * * * *

DISGUSTING THOUGHTLESSNESS.

"You seem much upset, my good man," remarked the curate, who happened to call when Murkie was laying down the law somewhat emphatically to his family circle.

"Hupset?" bellowed Murkie, "I should think I am hupset. Our blessed kid's just set 'isself on fire, an' blowed if the missus 'ere ain't bin an' put 'im out with my pot o' beer, an' me stony broke, too."



"How long does the train stop here?" the old lady asked the guard.

"Stop here?" answered the functionary. "Four minutes. From two to two to two-two."

"I wonder," mused the old lady, "if that man thinks he is the whistle?"

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THE MOTOR
WHAT IS IT
MAKES YOU MADLY SWEAR,
AND TEAR OUT HANDFULS OF YOUR HAIR,
AND THEN SIT DOWN IN MUTE DESPAIR?
YOUR MOTOR!
WHAT IS IT
SOMETIMES WILL NOT GO,
AND MAKES YOU BEG AN ASS TO TOW
YOU HOME AT SOLEMN PACE AND SLOW?
YOUR MOTOR!!!
WHAT IS IT
BRINGS YOU FRIGHTFUL BILLS
AND ALL THE VERY NEWEST ILLS,
INCLUDING TONICS, DRAUGHTS & PILLS?
YOUR MOTOR!!!
Claude Hempson

[CAP AND BELLS continued overleaf.]

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THE TENOR, THE SPUR, AND THE HIGH C.

QUITE SOUGHT AFTER.

WALKER: "The bride was quite a popular girl, wasn't she?"

WATKINSON: "Yes, indeed. The *Evening Scarifier* sent its sporting man to report it. He printed a list of rejected lovers half a column long under the heading, 'Among Those who Also Ran.'"

* * * * *

TO DRY HIS TEARS.

A cabman once drove a lady and her little girl from Euston to Charing Cross.

On the way a particle of dust entered the eye of the driver, causing him considerable annoyance.

On arriving at their destination the lady gave the cabby just the bare fare, and then, this being the first opportunity the cabman had, he took out his handkerchief and attempted to extract the cause of his pain.

The little girl perceiving this spoke a few words to her mother, and then ran back to the Jehu, saying:

"Please, cabby, mother said you are not to cry; here is another sixpence."

* * * * *

A THOUGHT.

If a baby's power were equal to its malevolence there would be a great many more murders committed in this country.

THEY USED CLEAN ONES.

The headmaster of a boarding school in Sheffield is very particular about the behaviour of his scholars during meal times. A short time ago the master observed one of the boys cleaning his knife on the tablecloth and immediately pounced on him.

"Is that what you generally do at home, sir?" he asked sternly.

"Oh, no," replied the boy quietly, "we generally use clean knives at home."

* * * * *

TOO TALL.

SHE: "Is that friend of yours whom you are expecting a tall man?"

HE: "About six feet two inches. Why do you ask?"

SHE: "Because in that case I shall have to dust the ornaments on the top shelf."

* * * * *

WAXING SARCASTIC.

A distinguished diplomatist from the United States of America, a very genial and sociable being, soon after his arrival in London made the round of the sights—Madame Tussaud's among the number.

"And what do you think of our wax-work exhibition?" asked a friend.

"Well," replied the American, "it struck me as being very like an ordinary English evening party."

[CAP AND BELLS continued overleaf.]

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FIT FOR NEITHER MAN NOR BEAST.

A Yorkshire squire of the good old-fashioned sort met one day the vicar of the parish, a young man who had been recently appointed to the living, and wishing to be as hospitable to him as he had been to his predecessor, he invited him to drop in some night "and have a glass and a bit crack."

The parson, who practised the mortifying of the flesh, replied that he did not drink.

"Well, well," said the old man, "maybe ye can tak' a draw at the pipe with me."

The reply was:

"I am very sorry, but I do not smoke."

Such unheard-of abstinence completely astounded the squire, and his surprise prevented him from speaking for a few minutes. Then he suddenly said:

"Do ye eat grass?"

"Eat grass? Certainly not. I do not understand."

"Well, well. Ye don't drink, ye don't smoke – ye're a queer 'un—and ye don't eat grass. Why, man, ye're fit company for neither man nor beast."

* * * *

WHY HE COULDN'T.

One of the twins was in the habit of bullying the other, and the latter complained with such frequency that their father finally said to him:

"Why do you come to me? Why don't you do to him just what he does to you? If he hits you, why, hit him back."

But the next day there was the same complaint.

"He hit me with a hammer," wailed the boy.

"Well, why didn't you hit him back?" demanded the father.

"I couldn't find another hammer."

* * * * *

A NECESSARY PRECAUTION.

SHE: "Papa says that when coming to see me you must not come in a 'bus any more."

HE: "Really! Does he expect me to walk all this distance?

SHE: "Of course not. He says all he asks is that you will come in a carriage hired by the hour."

He: "Then I am to understand that you absolutely reject my offer?'

She: "There is really nothing else for it."

He: "Well, I think it very selfish of you. Here, I've actually gone and purchased a guide to Margate for our honeymoon."

STRAIGHT FROM THE ANIMAL.

A London gentleman having taken a small farm in the country as being the correct thing to do, as well as to get a little fresh air, had invited some of his friends down to see his new possession.

Having viewed the domain, and noting the absence of creature life about the place, one of his friends remarked:

"With a nice, open place like this, I wonder you don't have some animals about, as is usual on a farm; some cows, for instance, so as to have your own butter and cream."

"No-o," drawled his host; "don't care about butter or cream."

"Some chickens or ducks, then. You surely like fresh eggs?"

"No-o, don't care for eggs. But I've sometimes thought I'd keep a sheep. I rather like kidneys for breakfast."

* * * *

A BRAVE MAN.

"Captain," said the first mate of the good ship *Cauliflower* while the storm was at its height, "the ship has sprung a leak, the water-tight compartments are full of water, and the vessel is going down. What shall we do?"

The gallant skipper's face blanched, but only for one-eighth of a second did he lose his self-control.

"Don't waste a moment," he replied. "Prepare at once an address thanking me for my coolness and heroism in the face of deadly and overwhelming peril. Let not a boat leave the ship's side until every man and woman has signed it."

* * * * *

NOT WHAT WAS EXPECTED.

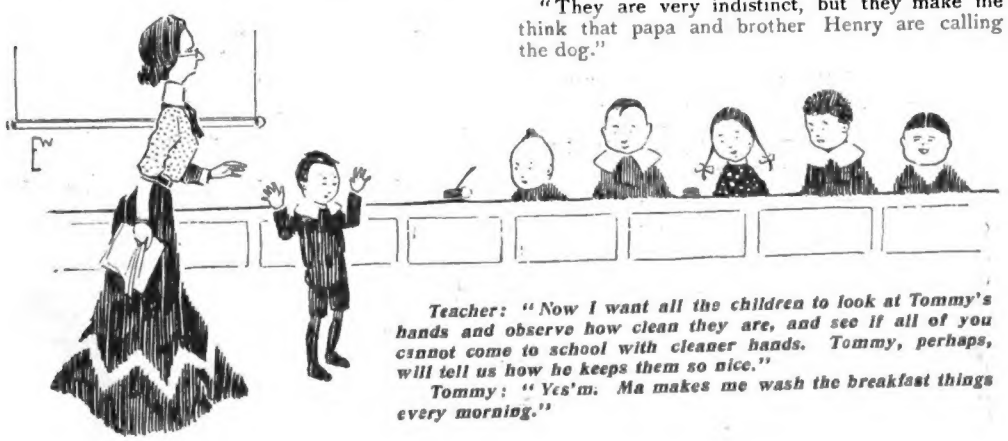
"Naomi," he said softly, as he gazed at the moon above them, "isn't the evening beautiful? Do you know, strange fancies throng my mind on a night like this. Every zephyr seems to bear gentle voices, perhaps from the spirit world. Do you hear such voices?"

Silence for a moment.

"I think I do, George."

"What do they sound like to you?"

"They are very indistinct, but they make me think that papa and brother Henry are calling the dog."



Teacher: "Now I want all the children to look at Tommy's hands and observe how clean they are, and see if all of you cannot come to school with cleaner hands. Tommy, perhaps, will tell us how he keeps them so nice."

Tommy: "Yes'm. Ma makes me wash the breakfast things every morning."

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MR. EDITOR —HIS PAGE.

"The Royal" Photographic Competitions.

THE SECOND PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION: RESULT.

I AM very pleased indeed with the result of this competition. It has turned out incomparably better than the previous one, though I don't believe the subject set—Children and Animals—was any easier than, Children Kissing, the subject of the first competition. When posing and snapshotting the children kissing, the chief obstacle which the competitors had to overcome was the self-consciousness of the little sitters. In the present competition it is the animals which are the bother—the difficulty of getting them to keep still during the operation. And the wonder is that so many have succeeded in producing really exquisite results. Indeed, I have had the greatest difficulty in selecting the winner. It was a case of *embarras de richesse*, as the French have it; only after consultation and careful thought and the weighing of many rival excellences was I able to arrive at a definite decision and present

MISS E. M. GODDARD,
East Street, Farnham,
Surrey,

with the prize of five guineas.

I have retained quite a large number of the other attempts, which I hope to reproduce in THE ROYAL later on. As competitors know, I pay half-a-guinea consolation prize for any photograph, except the prize-winner's, which I may publish in THE ROYAL.

A THIRD PHOTOGRAPHC COMPETITION.

The very gratifying success of this second competition has decided me to offer a third; and, in order that competitors abroad and in the Colonies may have ample opportunity of competing with English photographers, a much longer period will be allowed in which to complete the photographs. This time there will be two subjects to choose from, and for the best photograph of each subject I will give a prize of three guineas. Here are the subjects:

1. MY SUNDAY BEST.

This is to be a photograph of a child (or more than one child, for that matter) dressed in its best clothes. The scene may be indoors, or, if the photographer wishes, out of doors.

2. A MORNING DIP.

This should represent a child (or children) bathing either in the sea or some inland water, or undergoing the ordeal of a morning tub indoors.

The conditions which competitors have to observe are as follows:

The prize-winner in each subject will receive three guineas for the copyright of his or her photograph, which may be reproduced in THE ROYAL, together with a selection of the best efforts of other competitors. Each competitor whose work we reproduce, with the exception of the winner's, will receive half-a-guinea consolation prize. Competitors may go in for both subjects if they wish to.

All competitors must send in their efforts not later than Saturday, August 15th. The photographs should be carefully packed, marked "Photo Competition" in the top left-hand corner, and addressed to "The Editor, THE ROYAL MAGAZINE, 17 and 18 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, London, W.C." Should competitors wish to have their efforts returned, they must inclose stamps sufficient to defray the postage.

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